



William Fryer.

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1507/1627.





A
NATURAL HISTORY
O F
SINGING BIRDS:

AND PARTICULARLY,

That SPECIES of them most commonly
bred in BRITAIN.

Great Britain

To which are added,

Figures of the COCK, HEN, and EGG, of each
SPECIES, exactly copied from Nature,
and elegantly engraven on COPPER.

TOGETHER WITH

The Figure, Description, and Use of the DAY-NET, and
the Manner of catching small BIRDS of all Kinds.

By a LOVER of BIRDS.

EDINBURGH:

Printed for J. WOOD, opposite Luck-in-booths.

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T H E
P R E F A C E.

OF all the various species of birds, none prove so agreeable companions to man, as those who enjoy the gift of harmony and speech; and if we consider their variety, beauty, and music, the animal world does not afford us objects more grateful to the eye, nor any that so sweetly charm the ear.

Here we discover the inexhaustible traces of divine wisdom, in a rich variety of useful and beautiful creatures, who pour out their melodious notes with such lavishness, and warble forth the praises of their Creator with such exquisite sweetness, as must engage every musical ear to listen to their harmony.

How agreeably are we surprised to hear a concert of birds in full chorus, celebrating the great Author of nature,

and proclaiming their grateful acknowledgments to him, by whose bounteous hand they are nourished and preserved !

Of all created beings, none set forth the praises of the Creator more liberally than those pretty harmless songsters, whose ravishing melody yields inexpressible delight : and it is very observable, that, of all the animal world none have a capacity of learning, or being taught articulate sounds, but the bird ; and in the faculty of speech, some have arrived at great perfection.

They were undoubtedly designed by the great Author of nature, on purpose to entertain and delight mankind, who for the most part, are well pleased with the music of these pretty innocent creatures.

It is a very agreeable amusement to observe, how vastly different are the various forms of their nests as to matter, order, shape, and situation ; one species builds their nest on the top of trees ; another chuses to settle on the ground : but where-ever their apartments are situated, they are always accom-

commodated with a shelter; that is, either under some herb, some shady bough, or a double canopy of leaves, from whence the rain descends without ever entering into the nest, which lyes concealed below. There does not seem any thing in nature more mysterious than that of this principle in animals, which directs every kind of bird to observe a particular plan in the structure of its nest, and instructs all of the same species to work after the same model; so that, by the make of their nest, you may with certainty know to what species it belongs.

How justly may we admire the impressions of a superior reason that actuates these little creatures, who cannot be supposed to have any certain knowledge, either what their eggs contain or, of the necessity there is to sit upon them to hatch their brood? yet we see this roving unsettled animal, now forgetting her natural disposition, fix herself upon her eggs; submit to several weeks restraint; renounce the pleasures that so agreeable a season of the year must afford her, with a tenderness that often

often prevents her care even for her own necessary food. The male, on his part, in order to alleviate her fatigue, repeats his journies without intermission, and waits on her with a collation ready prepared in his bill; and whenever he discontinues his assiduity, it is frequently to take his stand upon a neighbouring bough within her hearing, and there to entertain her with his warbling and musical notes. And he acts with so much vivacity and cheerfulness, with such an air of dignity, when he either takes his leave, or makes his approaches towards her, that we are at a loss to determine whether the incessant vigilance of the little mother, or the officious restlessness and complaisance of her mate, are the justest objects of our admiration. It is pleasant to behold the inventions of these little creatures, their melody, their labours, and the obliging civilities they frequently repay each other.

Whether with reason, or with instinct blest,
Know all enjoy that pow'r which suits 'em best;
To bless alike, by that direction tend,
And find the means proportion'd to their end.

Each

P R E F A C E.

Each loves itself, but not itself alone,
Each sex desires alike, 'till two are one:
Nor ends the pleasure with the fierce embrace,
They love them selves a third time in their race,
The young dismis'd to wander earth or air;
There stops the instinct, and there ends the care.
The link dissolves, each seeks a fresh embrace,
Another love succeeds, another race:
Still as one brood, and as another rose,
These nat'ral love maintain'd, habitual those.

When their young ones appear, adieu to music: they have then no time to spare or spend in singing; at least they indulge it with much less frequency at that season: the care of their little offspring now calls up their attention; they are pressed by necessity to seek for food and provisions for their support, till they are capable of shifting for themselves without their assistance. You will find them frequently up before the sun, and may observe them distributing their food with the greatest equality to each of their young: at other times, you will find them watching and defending them, hazard-ing their own lives to preserve their young from the attacks of an enemy, when drove to the extremity of an engagement.

As

As the bold bird, her helpless young attends,
From danger guards them and from want defends;
In search of prey, she wings the spacious air,
And with th' untasted food supplies her care.
Thus beast and bird their common charge attend,
The mothers nurse it, and the fires defend.

The wondrous wisdom of God displayed in the creation of fowl, the fit formation of their bodies for flight, the curious structure of their feathers, the regular order in which they are placed, the sollicitude and care with which they attend their eggs, the surprising mechanism of their nests, with the birth and education of their young, deserve our nicest attention.

Therefore, I thought, I could not do a more acceptable service to the lovers of these sweet choristers of the woods, considering that it had never been yet attempted in this kingdom, so far as I know, (which, I hope, will render it the more agreeable) than to furnish them with instructions for preserving them in their houses, because they cannot always be entertained with their sweet melodious music in the fields.

And for this purpose I have, in a
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P R E F A C E. vii

methodical manner, founded upon natural history, and carefully extracted from the most celebrated authors, given the description and character, &c. of each species; the distinguishing marks of Cock and Hen; the time and manner of building their nests; the number, colour, &c. of their eggs; how to order and bring up their young; with the several distempers incident, and their proper cures; and whatever else is either pleasant or necessary to be known concerning them.

Our Lord hath bid us consider the fowls of the air; and certainly they are a subject worthy of our consideration: and the more attentively we survey them, the more we shall wonder at and admire the divine workmanship which appears in them, and from thence be excited to praise their glorious Creator.

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P O E M
O N
S I N G I N G B I R D S.

YE feather'd flocks, your early tribute bring;
In tuneful notes, address the coming Spring;
With rural minstrels, bless the fertile field,
And joy to every faithful shepherd yield.
From mossy beds, behold the songsters fly,
Railing their early mattins in the sky;
Their structures for their growing young are seen,
Some on the trees, some on the flow'ry green;
'Tis here they feed, there rest in soft repose,
And various forms their various beauty shews.
Each flutt'ring pinion, each enamell'd wing
Attempts to rise, to hear its parent sing;
Till by degrees, kind Nature speeds her flight,
She joins the choir, with pleasure and delight.
In woods and vales, their chearing notes we hear,
Thro' all the changing seasons of the year:
Soon as the Sun sends forth its morning ray,
To nature's God, they nature's tribute pay.

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BLACK BIRD

Cock



Hen & Egg



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NATURAL HISTORY OF SINGING BIRDS.

By love inspir'd, in pairs the feather'd choir
Forfake the plain, and to the grove retire:
Nor long in vain they court the kind return;
With equal heat their little bosoms burn.

I. Of the BLACK-BIRD.

The Description and Character.

THE BLACK-BIRD is so well known, being to be met with in most, if not all our counties, that a very minute description of it would be unnecessary.

I chuse to begin with him first, because he is the largest song-bird, that I know of, to be found in this kingdom; and likewise one of the first that proclaims the welcome Spring by his shrill harmonious voice, as if he were the harbinger of Nature, to awaken the rest of the feathered tribe to prepare for the approaching season: and by the sweet modulation of his tuneful notes frequently

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endeavours

2 NATURAL HISTORY.

endeavours to delight the Hen, and allure her to submit to his embraces during the colder seasons of the year, even before the frosts are gone, or the buds and blossoms appear upon the trees.

The Cock, when kept in a cage, whistles and sings very delightfully all the Spring and Summer-time, at least four or five months in the year; being a stout hardy bird, which, besides his own natural note, may be taught to whistle a great many fine tunes.

When wild in the fields, he feeds promiscuously upon berries and insects. He is a very solitary kind of bird, that, for the most part, you'll find flying singly, (with none except his own mate,) amongst woods and hedges, where they mostly frequent.

The distinguishing marks of the Cock and HEN.

THEY are not easily known by their colour when young, but the blackest bird generally proves the Cock, being of a much finer black than that of the Hen, which appears more dusky: but the best way of distinguishing them when young is by their eyes; the *irides*, or circle that circumvests the eye of the young Cock-bird, is yellow, the Hen's considerably more pale: his bill is black, and seems not perfectly yellow till he is near a year old; the Hen's more pale or brownish, with the tip black: the mouth in both are yellow within.

The Cock, as well as the Hen-bird, while young, is rather brown, or of a dark ruflet, than black, and the belly of an ash colour; but after he has moulted off his chicken feathers, he becomes coal-black.

The

The Time and Manner of building their Nest.

THIS bird, as I observed before, being the first that proclaims the welcome Spring, builds its nest the soonest of any of the feathered tribe, having young ones by the end of March or sooner: they build pretty open, generally in banks at the foot of trees, or in hedges near the ground, and before there are many leaves upon the bushes, which so exposes their nest, considering the largeness of it, that it is easily discovered.

They build their nest very artificially; the outside of moss, slender twigs, bents, and fibres of roots, &c. all very strongly cemented, and joined together with clay; plastering the inside, and lining it with a covering of small straws, hair, or other soft materials, upon which the Hen lays four or five eggs, of a bluish green colour, full of dusky spots.

Of the Young.

How to order them; being never taken old, and tamed, but brought up from the nest.

THEREFORE such as would have them rare, and brought up to learn any particular tune, must take them at ten or twelve days old, or sooner, which should be done with all birds that you design to learn to whistle, speak, or imitate the song of any other fine bird.

The Black-bird commonly has four or five young ones at a breeding, which may be raised with little trouble, taking care to keep them clean, put them in a basket amongst clean hay, or short straw, till they are ready for caging, then separate them.

Feed them at first with soft meat, such as white bread and milk: when they begin to pick and feed themselves,

themselves, you may wean them from it, by giving them sheeps hearts, or other lean meat that is not salted, cut very small; take the same quantity of bread, rub it very small, put a little clean water, and mix them altogether till it becomes a soft paste.

When they are grown fully up, give them any sort of flesh-meat, raw or dressed, provided it be not salt: if you mix a little bread with it, to keep it moist, it will be the better food for them; but let it not be wet, for that will make it sour.

He is a stout healthful bird, not very subject to disorders: but if you find him sick or drooping at any time, give him a house-spider or two, or any other insect, such as they feed upon when wild in the fields, which will relieve him; and let him have a little cochineal in his water.

If you perceive him to scour, or dung loose, grate a small quantity of old cheese among his victuals, or put a little liquorish or saffron in his water. These are the things that can be recommended, and what will make him chearful, and do him good.

They love to wash and prune their feathers; therefore when they are grown up, set water in their cages for that purpose; but let it not stay with them any longer than they have done with it, as they would be always plunging, which makes them weak, and never hearty, or to delight in themselves.

It is to be remembered, at all times, to give your birds wholesome good food, never stale or sour, and to be ever mindful of keeping them clean. Its the best means to make all kinds of birds thrive, by preventing many diseases they are subject to, occasioned by their being kept nasty, or from bad unwholesome food.

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II.



SONG THRUSH



II. OF THE SONG-WOOD-THRUSH, OR MAVIS.

The Description and Character.

THIS is an excellent song-bird, and well known; in size it is a little less than the Black-bird, and generally weighs about three ounces. The bill is near an inch long, of a pale dusky colour; the *irides*, or circles of the eyes, are of a hazel colour; the upper surface of the body is of a fine olive, with a mixture of yellow on the wings; the breast yellowish, spotted with large dusky spots, and the belly more pale, inclining to the whitish; the tail is upwards of three inches long, and of the same colour with the upper part of the body, the legs and feet are of a dusky brown.

The SONG-THRUSH is a bird that continues with us all the year, and begins to sing very early in the Spring. He is a curious fine bird, as well for the great variety of his notes, as the long continuance of his song, which is, at least, nine months in the year; and at other times it is a solitary kind of bird, that keeps commonly in brambles and hedges, where it builds its nest.

In the beginning of the Spring, he sits on the tops of high trees, and sings most sweetly; and is one of the most delightful birds any person can desire to keep in a cage.

When brought up from the nest, they are capable of learning the notes of other curious song-birds; but their own song being preferable, that trouble is unnecessary.

The distinguishing Marks of the Cock and Hen.

THE Cock and Hen are so much alike in the colour of their feathers and shape of their bodies, that it is hard to discover any certain external marks, whereby to know the one from the other: Yet this mark will appear to a nice observer in a full feather'd bird. The dusky, or olive colour on his back, is somewhat darker than the back of the Hen-bird; and has a more glossy cast: The spots on his breast and belly appear darker and brighter likewise; and more white may be seen on his belly.

It is observable, that in the Cocks and Hens of all kinds of birds where the colours are the same in both, yet the cock-bird constantly excels the hen in his air, and the resplendency of his feathers. In an old Song-Thrush this difference is apparent; but then we have no such difficulty to know the cock, he sufficiently discovers himself by his song.

In young Thrushes, always choose the sleekest and brightest bird.—When they begin to feed, both cocks and hens will record: the Cock will get upon his perch, and sing his notes low for some time; the Hen will attempt to sing, but does it only by jerks, and so will disappoint your expectation.

At the latter end of the Summer, when their moulting is over, the Cock-bird will break out bold in his song, and sing in Winter as well as in Summer.

The Time and Manner of building their Nest.

THEY build very early in the Spring, near as soon as the Black-bird, and breed generally three times a-year, if they meet with no disturbance; and if the weather be mild and warm they commonly have young ones by the beginning of April; the second time in May, and the third in June. They build their nest much in the same situation with the former bird: in woods, orchards, and hedges, near the ground: the outside of the nest consists of fine soft green moss, interwoven with dead grass, &c. the inside very curiously plaster'd with cow-dung or clay, on which the Hen lays five or six eggs, of a blue or greenish colour, speckled with a few small black spots, mostly at the biggest end.

Of the Young.

How to order and bring them up.

THESE bred in March, or beginning of April, are preferable for breeding tame to any of these hatched later in the year.

You may take them at twelve or fourteen days old, or sooner, and feed them, as the Black-bird, with raw meat, (free of fat or strings,) cut very small, and bread mixed together, with hemp-feed bruised; put a little clean water, and mix them altogether till it becomes a soft paste; feed them with it every two hours: or you may give them bread and milk, mixed with hemp-feed bruised, for change of diet.

Be careful in keeping them very neat and clean: When their nest grows foul, take them out and put
clean

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clean straw or hay; when they are pretty well feathered, put them in a large cage with porches in it, and dry moss or straw at the bottom.

When they are grown up that they can feed themselves, you may give them any kind of flesh-meat, raw or dressed, provided it be not salt, with a little bread mixed with it, to keep it moist, but let it not be wet, for that will make it sour.

Give them fresh water twice a-week to wash in, with which you will find them much delighted, otherwise they will not thrive. If they are kept nasty, it will give them the cramp, which they are very subject to: good victuals, water, and clean lodging are the best means to prevent it.

The THRUSH, when wild in the fields, feeds on insects, snails, as also berries of white-thorn and mistletoe, &c.

Their Diseases and Cures.

If you find these birds droop at any time, give them a spider or two, and any other insect they use to feed upon when in the fields; and put a little liquorish or cochineal in their water.

They are sometimes subject to fits, then a spider or meal-worm is good; give them, once a-week, a little painted-colour'd snail, and lay a stone in the cage for breaking it on.

If they be subject to the cramp, rub their legs with capon's grease, and keep them warm.

If you perceive them to scour, or dung loose, grate a small quantity of old cheese among their victuals, or put a little liquorish or saffron in their water.

These, (with good care, which this bird deserves,) are the best remedies for their diseases, and will preserve them several years.

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OF SINGING BIRDS. 9

There is another kind, called the small **HEATH-THRUSH**, from its building on heaths and commons, and is known by his dark breast, being all over the body of a darker colour than the former, and, by some, much more valued for the sweetness of his song, and neatness of his plume: He is a fine tame neat bird, if well fed and kept clean; yet is he not comparable to the Song-thrush, nor generally so well known.

There are several methods laid down to distinguish the Cock of this kind from the Hen: But, to avoid needless particulars, take the following; first view his gullet, whether it be white, with black streaks on each side; then observe if he hath large blackish spots upon his breast, and the colour of his head of a light shining brown, with black streaks under the eye, and upon the pinion of the wing; if these marks be found, you are right in your choice.

The Hen builds by the heath-side, either in a bush, or by a ditch-side, in the stump of any old haw-thorn, and seldom haunts the woods and shaws, as the former does: Her nest is very difficult to be found, which she builds with green ground moss, &c. making a small deep nest; she begins not to hatch till the middle of April, and breeds twice a-year, the young are to be brought up and taken care of, in every respect, as the Song-Thrush.

There is another kind of the Thrush, called the **MISSEL-BIRD**, from its feeding on the berries of the mistletoe.

This bird, in the colour and spots of the breast and belly, agrees with the Song-Thrush; but is a larger bird, and very rare to be seen.

They build their nest in a thicket, near where
plenty

plenty of mistletoe is; or in some pit, it being a very solitary sort of bird: They make as large a nest as a Jay, and lay as big an egg; they build commonly with rotten twigs the outside of their nest, and the inside is dead-grass, or moss that they pull from trees. This bird delights mightily in old orchards. The Hen breeds twice a-year, and hath three young ones at a breeding, never above four; she feeds all her young with the berries of mistletoe, and nothing else that ever could be perceived.

Many writers are of opinion, that this bird is an excellent remedy against convulsions and the falling sickness; for this reason, that the mistletoe, which they continually feed upon, is esteemed so good a remedy against it, and is approved by many physicians.

As to the method of using it, kill the bird, dry it to powder, and take the quantity of a penny-weight every morning in six spoonfuls of distill'd water off mistletoe berries, or black cherry water, fasting about an hour after; and they say, one bird taken thus will certainly effectuate the cure. It is no chargeable medicine; by finding a nest, or shooting an old bird, trial may be made.

This bird is very beautiful to look at, but not valued for singing; therefore is not worth taking any further notice of.

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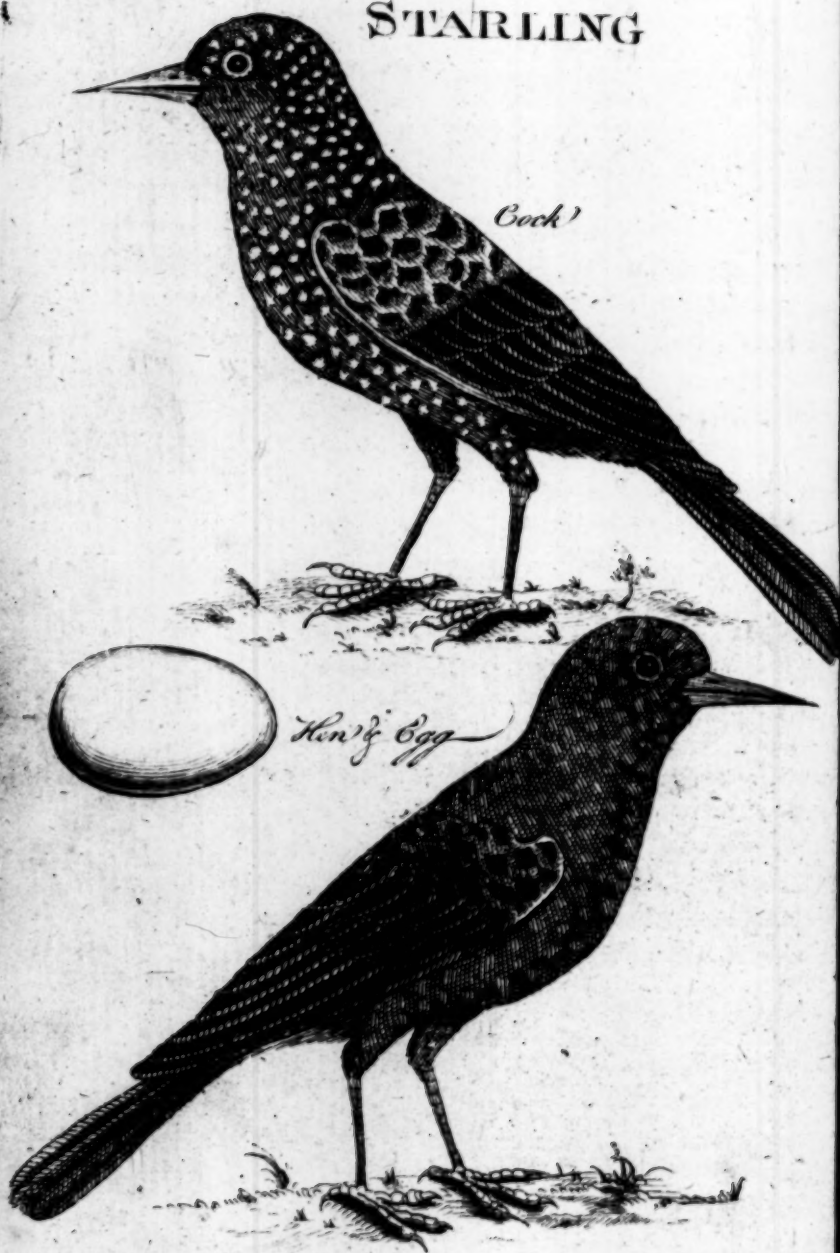
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STARLING



III. OF THE STARLING.

His gaudy robes in dazzling lines appear,
And ev'ry feather shines and varies there.

The Description and Character.

THE STARLING is near as big as the Black-bird, and in shape very much like that bird. It is in length, when full grown, from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail, nine inches, of which the bill is one and a quarter, and the tail three inches long; and, when in flesh, weighs about three ounces.

They do not sing naturally, but have a wild screaming uncouth note; yet for their aptness in imitating human voice, and speaking articulately in a very surprizing manner, and learning to whistle variety of fine tunes, they are highly valued as very pleasant birds: and, when well taught, will sell for a great deal of money; five lineas and more have been given for one.

It is a bird that continues with us all the year. In the Winter time they fly together in great flocks, sometimes intermixing with Fieldfares, &c.

The distinguishing marks of the Cock and HEN.

THERE is a mark peculiar to the Cock of this kind, whereby he may be known from the Hen, and its young. Under his tongue he has a black spot, very plainly to be seen if you open his mouth, which the Hen has not; or at least so faint,

faint, that it is hardly visible; but the first time the Cock moults his feathers, he loses that black stroak. He may then be known from the Hen by his colours, in the beauty of which he much excells her.

His breast has a cast of green, red, and purple &c. the feathers all over his body are of a fine black, shaded with a blue and purple gloss, varying as it is variously exposed to the light; only the tips of the feathers on his head, neck, and breast, are yellowish, on the belly, and under the tail, of a sort of ash colour: all his spots and colours are brighter than those of the Hen. His tail-feathers are of a dusky colour, with some of their edges inclining to yellow, the legs of a dusky brown, feather'd as low as the knees.

The Time and Manner of building their Nest.

THEY build their nest in the holes of old towers, pigeon-houses, trees, &c. The goodness of these birds does not depend upon the places where they breed, tho' some have given the preference to one sort, and some to another; yet the same birds may build in any of these places, as they find it most convenient for them.

This bird usually breeds in May: the Hen lays four or five eggs, lightly tinged with a greenish cast, and has young ones fit to take toward the end of that month, and sometimes sooner.

Of the Young.

How to order and bring them up.

THE young-ones, to avoid their natural squeaking

tone, must be taken from the old ones at eight or ten days old; the great fault generally is, that they are got too much fledged out of the nest, which makes them retain too much of their own harsh notes.

They are to be brought up, taking the same care in keeping them clean and warm as was directed in the Black-bird and Thrush. Put them in a basket upon short straw or hay, and bring them up with the same meat, and after the same manner, in every respect, as young Black-birds, &c.

Feed them every two hours at least, and give them five or six small pieces at a time; let them have enough, but never overload the stomachs of young birds; it does them more harm than you are aware of.

To slit their tongues, as some people practise, that the bird, as they say, may speak the better and plainer, has been found by experience to be of no service. They will talk as well without it, as will likewise all other birds of that nature.

When they begin to feed themselves, put them in a large cage with perches, short hay and straw, or rather small gravel at the bottom; give them fresh water twice a-week (besides their daily wafer) to wash themselves in; this is the most sure method to have healthful birds, such as will reward your trouble in bringing them up.

This bird, when wild in the fields, feeds upon beetles, worms, and other insects.

Their Diseases and Cures.

THIS is naturally a hardy and healthful bird; but, when kept in a cage, is subject to the cramp, &c.

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Sometimes they seize him so suddenly ; that he will fall down from his perch ; and, if not taken up in time, will presently beat himself to death. A spider or meal worm is a good remedy against them, giving him two or three at a time, twice or thrice a-week.

If troubled with the cramp, rub his legs well with capon's greese, and keep him warm.

But above all, giving him good meat and drink, and keeping him clean, will prevent his fits, or any other disorder, better than any thing else.

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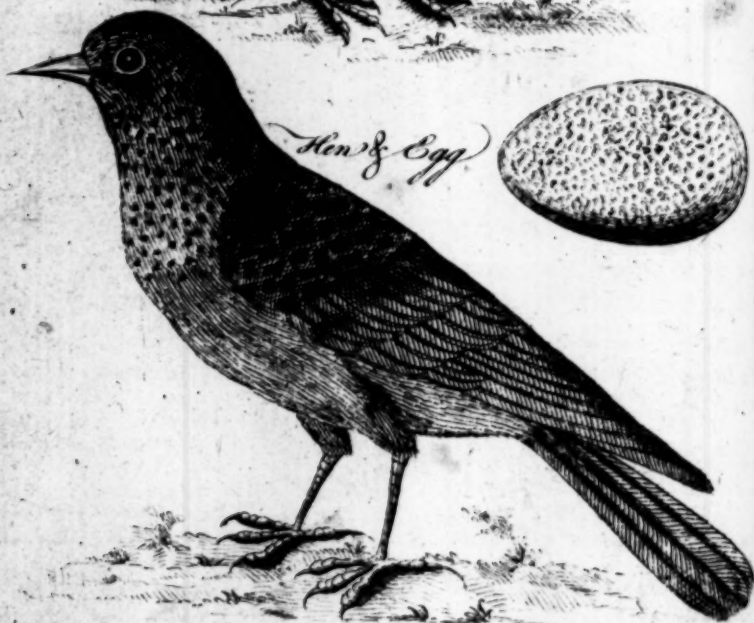
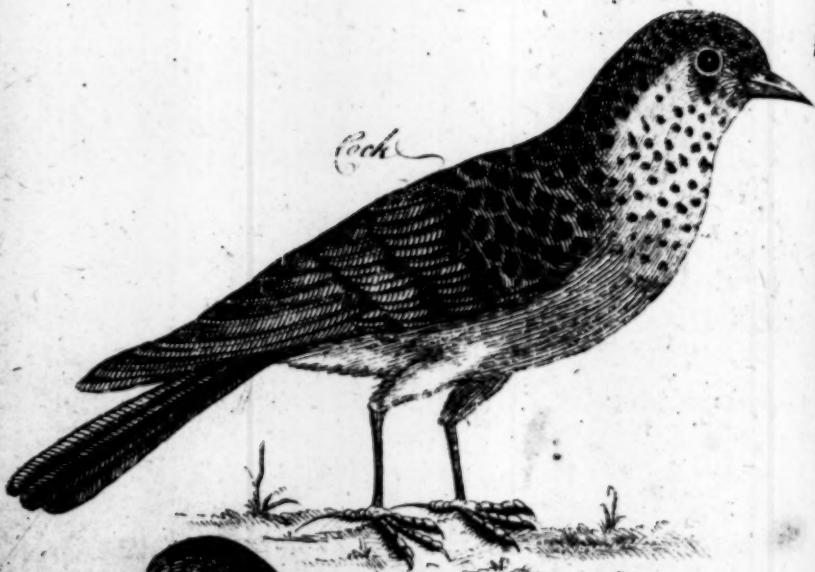
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IV



SKY LARK



IV. OF THE SKY-LARK.

The little Lark unfolds his wings,
And sweetly soars, and sweetly sings:
Along the sky his music floats,
And distant hills return the notes.

The Description and Character.

THE SKY-LARK is a neat long-bodied bird. The head and upper part of the body is of a redish sort of ash-colour, the middle parts of the feathers mostly black: the feathers on the head will sometimes raise and ruffle up like a crest; there is a little circle of cinerous feathers passing from eye to eye, which encircles the hinder part of the head; the wings are pretty long, and several of the quill-feathers tipp'd with white; the middle part of the throat and breast are yellowish, spotted with brown, the sides more shaded with red; the tail is near three inches long, the exterior webs of the feathers white, some black, others ash-coloured; the legs and feet are dusky; the back claw or heel very long, which is one of the principal marks by which the Cock is distinguished from the Hen.

The Cock Sky-Lark is as good a song-bird as most of that kind produced in this nation. He is vastly stout and lavish in his song: he sings eight or nine months in the year; and considering the stateliness and beauty of this bird, his great freedom in singing, the variety of his pleasant harmonious notes, and the many years he may be kept in a cage with due care, being a very hardy

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bird, he is highly deserving the best character can be given him, and worthy the esteem of all lovers of birds.

The distinguishing marks of the C o c k and H E N.

To distinguish the Cock from the Hen of this kind, while young, is no easy matter, and about which there are various opinions; but to avoid needless particulars, 1. chuse out the straightest and loftiest, and the bird that sets up his feathers on his crown. 2. The breast of the Cock is brighter and larger spotted then that of the Hen, has more white in the tail-feathers, and the back claw or heel is considerably longer, and is every way a fuller bodied bird than the Hen.

These are the most certain marks to distinguish the Cock from the Hen, and never fail.

The time and manner of building their Nest.

THEY frequently build their nest on the open plain ground, under the side of some little tuft of grass, in a hole, either in cornfields or high grass meadows of any sort, or in pasture of any kind, building with dried weeds, and other such like materials as these places produce; on which the Hen lays four or five eggs, thickly spotted with brownish specks: they have young ones by the middle of May, or sooner. The fewest nests of this bird, of which great flocks are to be seen almost in every country, are found of any (so far as I know) that are so plentiful.

Of

Of the Young.

How to order and bring them up.

THE young ones may be taken at ten, twelve, or fourteen days old, or sooner, especially if it be rainy weather; it is surprizing to see how soon they will leave their nest. One would naturally think the nest to be the best and safest place for them in such weather; but so it is, that the young of most, if not all kinds of birds, are nourished more, their feathers grow faster, and sooner fly, or quit their nests in wet, than in dry weather.

When you have taken a nest of young ones, put them into a little basket (made for that purpose) with short clean hay or straw at the bottom; feed them at first with white bread and milk boil'd pretty thick, mixed with about a third part of rap-feed; soak your rap-feed in clean water, then boil it, take off the scum, and strain it; bruise it very small, and mix them together. Feed your birds every two hours from morning till night.

Or you may wean them from it, and bring them up with sheep's heart minced very fine, or other lean flesh-meat, and an egg boil'd hard and chopped together, mix'd with a little white bread moisten'd in clean water; but let it not be wet, for that will make it sour.

In a week's time you may put them in a large cage without perches, with short fine hay, straw, or rather coarse bran at the bottom, turning or shifting it every day.

The care that is necessary in bringing up young birds, in keeping them clean, and feeding them regularly, from morning till night, with fresh and wholesome food, deserves attention; as the

18 NATURAL HISTORY

principle means of preserving them cannot be too often repeated.

When they come to feed themselves, which they will do in about three weeks or a month, then give them bread, egg and hempseed bruised, mingled together with a little oat-meal; for change of diet, you may sometimes give them a little flesh-meat.

Being brought up young, these birds may be train'd to any thing; but, be sure to give them gravel mixed with hay-seeds at the bottom of their cage, and to let them have a fresh green turf once or twice a-week.

Be always sure to shift their gravel often, and keep them clean, that they may not clog their feet: this careful management, as those birds are of a hardy nature, will preserve them many years.

The Sky-Lark, as mentioned before, being of a hardy nature, seldom is subject to any distemper; but, if you perceive him at any time to scour or dung loose, grate a small quantity of old cheese among his victuals, or give him three or four woodlice in a day, or a spider or two, and in his water, a little saffron or liquorish; these are the best things that can be recommended, and what will relieve him, tho' he won't often stand in need of any thing more than good meat and drink, clean gravel, and a fresh turf.

How to take young and old SKY-LARKS,
and to order them when taken.

To take the young birds which have left their nest three or four days, you must watch in some convenient place, as much out of the old one's sight

sight as possible, and you'll see them bring meat to feed their young, which as soon as you perceive, and observe them to hover near the ground, they will drop down on a sudden, then run in upon them as fast as you can, where you'll generally find the young birds. If you miss them, search narrowly about, for they will creep into some hole, and lye close, or into a large tuft of grass, &c. sometimes they will run away among the grass or corn exceeding fast; when they do that, you can very seldom catch any: you must wait for the old ones bringing them meat again, which will find them out, and soon get them together.

When you take any of these birds, cage, feed, and order them as the nestlings. If you find them fullen, that they won't eat, you must for a little while cram them with sheep's heart, &c. and they will soon come to. These birds generally prove as good, or better than those reared from the nest.

The next season for taking them, is in June and July, with a hawk and a net, before they have moulted their nestling feathers: those taken at that time, before they begin to moult, are very good, little inferior to the nestlings, but, if in their moult when taken, seldom prove good birds.

When you have found where the Larks are, get as near them as you can, holding your hawk up upon your hand, making him hover his wings as you go; when they perceive him, they will lye so close to the ground, that you may very easily draw your net over them.

They are likewise taken in the Winter time by the sea-shore, where they fly in great flocks seeking their food, when there is snow upon the ground, by taking a line of pack-thread, and fastening, at the distance of every six inches, a noose

or

or gin, made of two horse hairs twisted together; the longer the line is, the better, and consequently will afford the more sport; then, at every proper distance, have little hooked sticks to thrust into the ground, and so go on the whole length of the line, then scatter a few white oats from the one end to the other; by this great numbers of these, and other fine birds are ensnared.

These birds, when taken old, are generally a little wild at first; therefore, to prevent them from fluttering and beating against the cage, tie the tips of their wings, and strew a little of their meat in the bottom of the cage, till they become both acquainted and tame; as soon as you perceive them pretty orderly, untie their wings, still letting them hing in the same place.

Their food must be at first hemp-seed bruised, bread, and a few white oats; for they take great delight in husking the oats: and to make them sing, give them bread, egg, and bruised hemp-seed mixed together, and sometimes a little mutton, veal, or sheep's heart, minced very small, provided it be fresh; for you must not give them, nor any other bird, flesh meat of any kind that is in the least salt.

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TIT LARK

Cock



Hen & Egg



F. N. 1794

THE LARK.

LANDSKIPS how gay the bow'ry grotto yields,
Which Thought creates, and lavish Fancy builds!
What Art can trace the visionary scenes,
The flow'ry groves, and everlasting greens?
Nature and Art in all their charms combin'd,
And all Elysium to one view confin'd!
Yet in such charms, the noble thoughts abound,
That needles seem the sweets of easy sound:
So tries the artless Lark her early flight,
And soars to hail the God of Verse and Light.
Scarce within view, a-loft the Sky-Lark tow'rs,
And his glad sound in chearful musick pours
He feels in every pulse the gentle glow,
And looks and listens to the plain below;
Charm'd by his song, if thence his part'ner calls,
To her lov'd breast with am'rous speed he falls.
Unrival'd, as thy merit, be thy fame,
And thy own laurels shade thy envy'd name;
Thy name, the boast of all the tuneful choir,
Shall tremble on the strings of ev'ry lyre:
No charms are wanting to thy artful lays,
The tribute song an humble subject pays.

V. OF THE WOOD-LARK.

To charm the Fair, while in a melting strain
The Wood-Lark, and the Nightingale complain.

The Description and Character.

THE WOOD-LARK is not quite so large a bird as the Sky-Lark, the make of its body being considerably shorter : It has a slender straight sharp-pointed bill, near half an inch long, of a dark brown or dusky colour, with hazel-colour'd eyes ; the head and back are of a brown sort of party colour, inclining to a black, with a redish or light brown shade, the middle parts of some of the feathers spotted with black ; his breast and belly are of a pale brown, spotted with faint black spots ; the neck is more of an ash-colour, with a pale wreath'd line passing round the hinder part of the head from eye to eye : the feathers in the wings have some of their edges white, others yellow, and those on the ridges of them more ash-coloured ; the rump is of a light brown, or yellowish red ; the tail, which is near two inches long, is of a dusky or fulvous red, with some of the tips white, others more inclining to black ; the legs and feet are of a pale sort of flesh-colour, the back toe pretty long, and the claws dusky.

This bird is universally admired for his great variety of soft and delightful notes, as well as his beauty, both in shape and plume, in which few birds excel him. Some affirm, they have counted more than thirty different changes in his song : It is exceeding pleasant to hear them in the night-time, in the months of May, June, and July,

WOOD LARK



Hen's Egg



T. P. Smith



July, when they are by some taken for the nightingale, and will frequently, when the nights are light, and more especially when the Hen is sitting, sing almost the whole night: their notes during the silence of the night are so sweet, that many have preferred them before that excellent bird, and, if he be hung in the same room, will strive with him for mastery; as it sometimes happens in the woods, where there is a strong contention between these two charming choristers to excel and out-do each other. But of this kind, as well as all the rest, there are some that far exceed others in length and sweetness of song.

The distinguishing marks of the Cock and H E N.

THEY are known by their size; the biggest and longest bodied bird generally proves a Cock, which may be distinguished from the Hen by the largeness and length of his call, the tall walking of the bird about the cage, and frequently, in the evenings, doubling his note, as if he were going to roost: other marks are by the length of his heel, the largeness of his wing, and setting up a crest or crown of feathers upon his head, and many other uncertain signs, which are all guess-work till you hear him sing. The use of this is chiefly to know those birds that are taken at flight-time; because those taken at other seasons sing soon after they are taken, or not at all.

To distinguish the Cock from the Hen, whilst nestlings, is very difficult, unless it be by that general remark, that the highest colour'd bird always proves a Cock, and that the biggest and longest bodied, and the other marks before mentioned,

tioned, will hold good in such young birds, as well as those that are full feathered.

This particular indeed is not very material, because so few are brought up from the nest, it being very difficult, with the utmost care that can be taken, to rear them; either the cramp or scouring kills them, or they die in moulting.

The Time and Manner of building their Nest.

THOUGH this is a very tender bird, yet it breeds very early in the Spring, much about the same time with the Black-bird; they generally build at the foot of a bush or hedge, and sometimes under the side of a turf on lay-grounds, where the grass is rank and dry, under some tuft to shelter them from the wind and weather, which at that time of the year is commonly very cold; their nest is made of withered grass, fibrous roots, and other such like materials, lined with a few horse-hairs at the bottom, being a small and very indifferent fabric; on which the Hen lays four or five eggs of a pale bloom colour, beautifully mottled and clouded with red and yellow, &c.

Of the Young.

How to order and bring them up.

If you have a mind to bring them up from the nest, which you will find exceeding difficult to do to any perfection, don't take them too soon, nor before they are well feathered; because, when they are too young, they are more subject to the cramp

cramp and scouring, which commonly kills them; put them at first into a basket, with short hay or straw at the bottom, where they may lyé clean and warm.

Feed them with sheep's heart, or other lean flesh meat, mixed with a hard boil'd egg, a little bread and hemp-feed bruised or ground, taking the hulls clean away, then chop altogether as fine as possible to do it, and make it a little moist with clean water; this continue to do every two hours, or as often as you feed them, giving them but little at a time, and taking great care never to overload their stomachs. Let not their meat be too stale, dry, mouldy or sour; for birds so fed, whether old or young, will never thrive.

As for the ordering of them when grown up, you must put them in a large cage with perches, and two pans; one for mixed meat, and another for oat-meal and hemp-feed. Boil an egg hard, take a little white-bread, and as much hemp-feed bruised, and mingle all together as fine as you can, adding a little of the flesh now and then for change of diet, always leaving some of their constant meat in the cage at the same time, that they may eat what they will. It is necessary sometimes to put a slice of liquorish, a little white sugar-candy, or a blade or two of saffron into their water, which is certainly an advantage to their singing.

Strew fine gravel at the bottom of the cage, and renew it every week at farthest; otherwise the dung will cling to his feet, benumb him, and cause the cramp, and he will not take delight in himself; for he takes a great deal of pleasure in walking himself in sand, which if he have not pretty often, he will grow lousy, and then seldom, if ever, comes to perfection; therefore be

sure to keep him clean and neat, and he will answer your expectation, as well as reward your trouble.

The Diseases incident to WOOD-LARKS.

THE particular distemper this fine bird is subject to, is the cramp, giddiness in the head, and to be very lousy.

They are not so subject to these when in the fields, by reason they have a variety of motion, as flying and running, which they have not in a cage.

When you find the Lark disorderly and not well, give him meal-worms or hog-lice, not more than two or three a-day. If he should scour or dung loose, grate a small quantity of chalk among his meat, and amongst his gravel likewise.

Also, give him, in the bottom of his cage, mould full of ants and other insects, which is the most agreeable live-food you can give him.

An uncommon care should be taken of preserving this fine bird, because he is so very tender, by often shifting his gravel, victuals, water, &c.

The Seasons for catching WOOD-LARKS with nets; and how to order them.

THE young birds are first taken in the month of June, July, and August, with a net and hawk after the same manner as the Sky-Lark. Those taken at this time sing presently, yet continue but a little time in song; for they immediately fall to moulting, which if they get over, they commonly prove very sweet song-birds.

The next season of taking them is at the general flight-time, which is the latter end of September, when they rove in flights from one country

to another; then you can hardly distinguish an old bird from a young one, by reason they are all moulted off, and are strong, handsome, sprightly, straight birds.

At this time they fly commonly very high; therefore the highest ground is usually chosen to lay the nets upon, or where a spot of earth is fresh turned up, and sometimes you may turn it up on purpose.

A third season for taking Wood-Larks, is in January; what are caught at that time are very stout, and, for the most part, do prove the best birds, by reason they are taken in full stomach, and will sing in a short time after, (if good conditioned,) and are more perfect in their song than those taken at other seasons; this bird delights much upon gravel-ground, and woods that lye exposed to the rising sun.

All the Wood-Larks taken at different seasons must be fed a-like with hemp-seed bruised very fine, and mixed with bread and egg, hard boil'd, and grated or chopped as small as possible.

When first taken, he will be shy for some time; you must sift fine red gravel in the bottom of his cage, and scatter some of his meat upon it, which will entice him to eat sooner than out of his trough; you may leave that off, when you find he eats out of the latter freely.

The Wood-Lark, as if sensible of his own melodious song, will learn from no other bird, unless brought up from the nest.

THE WOOD-LARK.

THOU pretty, little, fluttering thing !
Thou signal of the coming Spring !

When from the vales and hills remote,
We listen to thy warbling note ;
Where ev'ry fymphony displays,
The great Creator's nobler praise.

Emblem of innocence and love,
By which we raise our thoughts above !
That, like the purling riv'let, shows
The fountain clear from whence it flows ;
That sooths our cares, dispels our fears,
While nature all a calm appears.

VI. OF

VI. OF THE TIT-LARK.

The Description and Character.

THIS bird is less than the Sky-Lark, and is about the bigness of the Nightingale, has a very handsome shape, and so finely feathered, that in beauty few birds excel him.

He sings most like the Canary-bird of any whatever; but short, and hath no variety in it.

Sometimes a Cock Tit-Lark proves a very fine song-bird; but it is very rare, and the best of them sing but four or five months in the year.

This is a bird of passage, that shifts places according to the different seasons of the year, and is seen only in England, where he comes with the Nightingale, which is about the beginning of April, and returns again the beginning of September.

The distinguishing marks of the Cock and HEN.

OF this kind the Cock, all over his body, is of a brighter yellow than the Hen; but especially under the throat, and on the breast, legs and feet. In nestlings they cannot be well distinguished by their colours; therefore, one must wait till they begin to record and sing.

The time and manner of building their Nest.

THESE birds breed about the latter end of April, or beginning of May; and build their nest on the
C-3 ground,

ground, by some pond or ditch-side, and in gardens amongst high grafs, making their nest of dead-grafs, and a few small-roots, and commonly lay five or six eggs.

Of the Young.

THEY are brought up with the same meat and management as young Wood-Larks or Nightingales; but they are hardly worth the trouble of bringing up, because so many are taken with day-nets and lime-twigs, in the manner they catch Linnets, Gold-finches, &c.

When they are first taken, tye the ends of their wings with thread, to prevent their fluttering and beating themselves against the cage, and they will soon grow tame.

Feed them, as you do the Wood or Sky-Lark, with hemp-seed and bread, made very fine, and mixed together; likewise put ants-mould, and meal-worms, &c. in their cage: strew their victuals about their cage to allure them to eat. Sometimes they must be crammed at first, for they will not feed themselves, by reason they always feed on live-meat in the fields, such as caterpillars, flies, &c. for which cause, they are unacquainted with the meat we offer them. When the Tit-Lark comes to feed himself, he will eat what the Wood-Lark eats, or almost any other meat, and will sing in about a week's time.

These birds are very easily brought up, being hardy, and not subject to colds and cramps as other birds are, but live long if preserved with care.

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NIGHTINGALE



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VII. OF THE NIGHTINGALE.

How vast, how copious, are thy new designs?
How ev'ry music varies in thy lines!
No sweeter notes the echoing forests chear,
When Philomela sits and warbles there.

The Description and Character.

THIS bird in largeness nearly resembles the Robin-red-breast, but is longer bodied, and a straight handsome shap'd bird: Tho' there is not any thing remarkable in the beauty of its colours, as in a great many other birds; yet, by the generality of mankind, he is allowed to be one of the finest song-birds in the known world.

The Nightingale (which is deservedly called Philomela, or a lover of music, in that no bird hath so sweet a voice among all the Sylvan musicians,) is said to sing fifteen days and nights together, with little or no intermission; so shrill a voice in so little a body, and a breath so long extended, is worthy admiration.

What can be a more agreeable novelty, than to hear the Nightingale in the evening begin to tune his solitary strains, and continue them till the night is far advanced: one would imagine, that he was conscious of his own natural perfections, and that it was in complaisance to man, as well as to gratify his own inclinations, that he is pleased to sing when all the rest are silent. Nothing animates him so much as to find Nature hush, and still around him; it is then that he composes and puts all his melody in execution: he rises from
solemn-

solemnity to sprightliness of sound, and warbles, from a serious song, to a more sportive transition; after which he softens the sprightliest quavers and divisions into the most languishing and melancholy strains: when he has indulged himself in those plaintive airs for a short time, he recollects himself on a sudden, and falls into his former vivacity again, with so lavish a freedom, that he makes even the woods around him to echo. Who could be so dull, as not desire to obtain a view of this amiable musician, that, in such an obliging manner, amuses us each morning and evening; we are all tempted to visit him, but he is so reserved that it is next to an impossibility to see him. One would suppose, that Nature had furnished him with a vigorous breast, and indefatigable organs, to enable him to sustain such strong and graceful sounds without intermission; such infinite and just proportions! such a vast compass of music! and yet at last we find it all proceeds from the throat of a very little bird; who, without a master, study, or the least preparation, performs all these stupenduous operations: and this delightful bird, scorning to be outdone, will not yield to any competitor, either of birds or men. The Wood-Lark is his greatest antagonist, between whom there sometimes happens such a contention for mastery, each striving to outvie the other, that, like true-bred cocks, they seem resolved to die rather than lose the victory.

A pretty account of this action, as performed by these contending masters, I have just now before me, wrote by an author on the same subject, which I cannot help taking notice of, and shall give in his own words.

A plea-

A pleasant story of the WOOD-LARK and NIGHTINGALE.

“MYSELF, says he, and a gentleman, riding in the country in an evening hard by a coppice or wood-side, heard a Nightingale sing so sweetly, as, to my thinking, I never heard the like in all my life, altho’ I have heard many in my time; for the place being in a valley, and the coppice on the side of it, made all the notes of the Nightingale seem double with the echo. We had not staid long, but comes a Wood-Lark, and lights upon the twig of an oak, and there they sung, each outvying the other: In a short space more, about an hundred paces off, lights another Wood-Lark, distant from the first, and under him, as near as we could judge, was another Nightingale: these four birds sung with so melodious harmony, warbling out their pleasant notes for above a whole hour, that never any music came in competition with it, to the pleasing of our ears. As soon as the Wood-Larks were gone, the Nightingales, we supposed, went a little to refresh nature, having played their parts so well, that every bird in the highest degree strove for mastery, each striving to out-vie the other; my friend and I having stood a full hour to hear these songsters charming our ears, at our going, I persuaded him to sing a merry catch under the wood-side; which he had no sooner begun, but one of the Nightingales came and bore his part, and in a minute’s time came the other to bear his part, still keeping of their stations, and my friend and I standing
“ between

" between them; and so he sang three or four
 " merry songs, and the birds singing with him
 " all the time; and as he raised his notes, so did
 " they, that he did protest, he never enjoyed
 " more pleasure in so short a time in all his life:
 " for the coppice or wood, being upon the side
 " of a hill, and a valley in the bottom, so doub-
 " led all their notes with such a sweet and plea-
 " sant echo, that I am confident none could
 " think the time long in the hearing so sweet and
 " delightful pleasant harmony."

The distinguishing Marks of the NIGHTINGALE, COCK and HEN.

THERE is no peculiar marks in their colours to know them by; but as in other birds, where the colours are the same in both, so in these, the COCK is of a deeper and brighter colour than the HEN, which, when seen together, may, by a nice observer, be easily perceived.

The head and upper parts of the body, to the point of the tail, are of a dusky brown colour; the breast and lower parts considerably paler, inclining to a sort of dirty white or ash colour; the feathers underneath the wings tinged with a pale green, and the legs of a yellowish colour.

Some do undertake to distinguish the COCK from the HEN by their grossness, saying, That the COCK is much the larger and fuller bird, both in length and bigness; others are of opinion, that the COCK hath a greater eye, a longer beak, and a more redish tail: others again distinguish them by the pinion of the wing, and the feathers upon the head; all which opinions and judgments have been found very deceitful, and far wide of

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the truth; wherefore, for a most sure and certain sign, you may trust to these following observations:

First, Of nestlings that are taken from the old ones in the nest before they can feed, observe this rule, and mark it well, that, if any of the young birds or nestlings, before they can feed themselves, do record something of song, you will perceive the motion of their throats when they record; mark those birds for your use, for it is a certain sign: but when they come to feed themselves, the Hen will record as well as the Cock: therefore, give him some mark when he is young, for it is very difficult to distinguish him afterwards.

In the next place is your brancher, which the old birds have brought up to feed themselves. When you have taken any of these birds, if they feed freely, both Cocks and Hens will presently begin to record their song, but the Cock is much different from the Hen; for he continues his notes much longer and louder, and also with more spirit; after he hath eaten, he will get upon his perch, and record his song to himself very low, and usually you will find him standing upon one leg, holding on his warbling notes, which you may easily perceive by the motion of his breast, with a long continuance, which is not to be found in the Hen; for she goeth hopping and whistling up and down the cage, making a noise rather than a song, that is very much interrupted and short.

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The Time and Manner of building their Nest.

THEY are supposed to be birds of passage, that shift places according to the seasons of the year, being never seen in the Winter till their breeding time approaches, when they appear towards the latter end of March, or beginning of April.

They frequent cool and shady places where are little rivulets of water, and build their nest commonly, either in thick quick-set hedges, or in small groves among bushes, where are no very high trees; for they delight in no high trees except the oak, making their nest of the leaves of trees, straws, moss, and such other materials as the place affords. Some affirm they have found their nest upon the ground, at the bottom of hedges, and amongst waste-grounds; and some upon banks that have ben raised, and then overgrown with thick grass, where they lay four or five eggs of a brown nutmeg colour, and have young ones usually by the middle of May.

To find the NIGHTINGALE's nest.

IT seldom sings near its nest for fear of discovering it, but, for the most part, about a stone's cast distant.

Observe where the Cock sings, and if he continues long in one place, the Hen is not far off; but if they have young ones, he will now and then be a-missing, seeking food. The Hen, when you are near her nest, will be silent and cour: if you have searched long and cannot find it, try this experiment; stick two or three meal-worms upon

upon the bushes, near where you find the Cock mostly frequents, lye down close, keeping the worms in your view, and observe, when he comes to take them, which way he carries them; listen, and you will hear the young when they are feeding, for they make a great noise for so small a bird; when you have found the nest, if they be not ready enough, touch them not; if you do, they will not stay, the old ones will entice them away.

Of the Young.

How to order and bring them up.

THE NIGHTINGALES that are best to be kept should be of the earliest birds in the Spring; they become more perfect in their song, and also hardier, and continue longer in singing than those that are later bred, and you may have better hopes of their living.

The young ones must not be taken out of their nest till they are pretty well feathered; if you take them too young, they are subject to the cramp and looseness, which makes their feathers matt together and kills them. They are apt to be fullen, and refuse their meat when they are so old; therefore open their mouths gently, and give them two or three small pieces at a time, and in a few days they will take their meat off the stick themselves.

When you take them, put the nest in a little basket, and keep them covered up warm; for they are very tender, short liv'd birds, and without such care the cold kills them.

Feed them, as the Wood-Lark or Robin, with
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sheep's heart or other flesh-meat, raw, not salted, chopped very fine, well cleansed from skins, sinews, fat, or strings, mixed with hens eggs hard boiled, then mix all together with a little clean water, and work it into a soft paste, feed them with it every two hours or oftner.

When they begin to feed themselves, separate them in large back-cages with perches; let them have straw, dry moss or gravel in the bottom: they are great lovers of mould full of ants at the bottom of their cage.

To make the Nightingale sing more than ordinary, or at such times as they are not wont, give them, in Winter time, paste of pine-kernels pounded, and in their drinking-cup a shread or two of saffron; for these two things, by heating them, render them chearful and brisk, and so excite them to sing.

As the Nightingale, 'tis said, exceeds all other birds in singing, so doth he also in the exquisiteness of his scent; when wild, he doth most willingly haunt where sweet herbs grow, and is particularly delighted in musk, so that a grain or two of true musk put in cotton, and that into a small reed serving him to perch on in his cage, will provoke him to sing.

Of the NIGHTINGALE'S Diseases and their Cures.

In the Autumn, this bird is apt to grow extraordinary fat and foggy, that sometimes he will hardly touch his meat; during that time, give him two or three meal-worms at a time, twice or thrice a-week, or worms taken out of pidgeon-houses,

houses, and two or three spiders a-day, which will purge and cleanse him well.

Upon the falling of his fat, he must be kept warm, and have a little saffron in his water.

To raise them when they are very lean and poor, give them figs chopped small mixed with their meat, till they have recovered their flesh.

When they are kept two or three years in a cage, they turn very subject to the gout; for which, anoint their feet with fresh butter or capon's grease, as often as occasion requires: it is a certain cure for them. They are subject likewise to breakings out about their eyes and bill, for which use the same.

If they grow melancholy, put into their water some white sugar-candy; if that will not do, besides their constant meat, give them three or four meal-worms a-day, and a few ants or ants eggs with their mould at the bottom of the cage; also boil an egg hard, chop it very small, and strew it among the mould and ants eggs, and let them have saffron in their water.

They are sometimes troubled with a strangling or straitness of the breast, which is often occasioned by want of care in making their meat, by mincing fat or strings of sheep's heart, &c. with it.

How to catch old NIGHTINGALES, and to order them when taken.

THOSE taken in March or beginning of April are reckoned the best birds; these that are caught afterwards, when the Cocks are matched with the Hens, by reason of their rankness seldom

come to any thing, it being very difficult to preserve them, notwithstanding all the care that can be taken of them.

When you have found where they frequent, which is usually in a wood, or quick-set hedge, you may take them with the trap-cage, made on purpose for catching birds, baited with a meal-worm or other such-like insect; place your trap as near where the bird sings as you can; before you fix the trap, turn up the earth about twice the bigness of the trap, for where the ground is new turned up, there they look for food, and espying the worm they come directly to it, then you will quickly have them.

These birds are taken likewise with lime twigs by placing them upon the hedges or other places where they sing, with meal worms fastened at proper distances to allure them to the snare. But the trap-cage is reckoned by far the best and safest way of catching them.

When you take one, tie the tips of his wings softly with a thread, to prevent his beating himself against the top and wires of the cage; it will make him grow tame the sooner, and be more apt to eat his meat. You must tie the wings of the bird no longer than till he is taken with the cage: put him in a large back-cage for warmth, or, if you put him in an open one, darken one side with a cloth or paper, and at first place him in some private part, where he will be warm, and so that he be not disturbed.

As they will seldom at first eat any sheep's heart or egg, you must take care to bring him to it by degrees, his food formerly being live-meat, such as worms, ants, caterpillars or flies; at the first, you may shred two or three meal-worms, mingling them amongst his meat, with a few ants

to

OF SINGING BIRDS. 41

to entice him the better, that when he goes to pick up the ants, he may eat some of the heart and egg with it; and, when you perceive him to eat freely, give him the less ants, &c. in his meat, and at last nothing but sheep's heart and eggs as formerly directed, unless when you find him drooping and not well.

All that is to be said more concerning this melodious bird is, touching the length of his life.

Some live but one, some three, some five, and others until eight and twelve years old; they sing rather better and better for the first eight years; but then they decline by degrees, and where there is one kept in a cage until that age, a hundred die.

If they have good keepers, it will prolong their lives some years more. The care of some have been such, that it has been known Nightingales have lived to the age of fifteen years, and continued singing, more or less, for the most part of that time.

The opinion that they will never suffer themselves to be out-done in their singing, or submit to any competitor, whether bird or man, chiefly occasioned the following poem.

T H E

FIDDLER and NIGHTINGALE

A

P O E M.

PRONE to the sea the Sun declin'd a-pace,
 Mild in his course, and shorn of all his rays;
 When on the bank of Tyber's gliding stream,
 Retir'd from Cares and Phœbus' burning beam,
 Beneath a tow'ring rock a Fiddler sat,
 Pleas'd with the kindness of his smiling fate.
 A verdant prospect all around him lay,
 Whilst all around transported heard him play.

High on a tree, within a neighbouring grove,
 Stood Philomel, and warbled out her love:
 This Syren there her daily song renews,
 A hurtless Syren, a Sylvestrian Muse;
 Struck with unusual notes, she quites her stand,
 And, in a moment, perches o'er his hand;
 Hid in a thicket of a spreading bough,
 Receives his music, and returns it too.

Pleas'd with the fancy and his rival's play,
 He means to try her skill, and give her way:
 His nimble bow and pliant fingers fly,
 To every touch the ready notes reply:

Com

Commands the compass with a boundless sway,
Sweeps o'er the strings, and preludes to the fray.

As nimbly she resolves the various song,
In son'rous evolutions from her tongue.
Thus for the coming strife herself prepares;
And matchless art with equal courage dares.

The Fiddler strikes his sounding violin,
The conscious chords re-echo from within:
With easy slide he drew a downward stroke,
And in one simple sound the Fiddle spoke:
Now sharply turns the tune and plies amain,
On ev'ry string does every finger strain;
Then rests. The Bird, as skilful in her part,
Runs the same keys, and gives him art for art.
She with a careless air begins her song,
Draws out her notes, and makes 'em mighty long:
Deep in her throat the lengthen'd sounds arise,
Invariably the same without surprize;
Then in a moment chang'd her lab'ring voice,
Varies the tune, and charms ten thousand ways.

The wond'ring Fiddler in attention fixt,
Now with his rival, now himself perplex't,
Admires the harmony, and whence it flows,
From what such num'rous modulations rose.
In lofty flights he next attempts to rise,
And with a bolder stroke his Fiddle tries;
The sharp in smaller flourishes he proves,
Slurs it along, and to the grave he moves:
The grave in strong and louder strains resounds,
Beats the wide skies, and from the vales rebounds.
The rough, the smooth, the deep the sharp unite,
And from their discord yield a strange delight.

This Philomela tries, and, with her throat,
In little quavers shakes the trembling note:

But

But suddenly, to other measures run,
 Mounts in her voice, and raises high the tone;
 Calls up her strength, and throws out all her
 pow'r,
 And sings, and chants and makes a glorious
 roar:
 Nor rests; but brightens still, and boldly dares
 To imitate the thunder of the wars.

Abash'd, amaz'd, the angry Fiddler stood;
 Then thus bespoke the Songster of the wood:
 Presumptuous bird! to match unrival'd skill,
 As yet unmatched, unrival'd shall be still,
 If my good instrument and hand avail;
 Or break my Fiddle, and will own I fail.
 Nor more; but fiercely strikes the tuneful shell,
 From whence inimitable music fell.
 With eager hand he labours ev'ry string.
 While with the sound the woods and vallies ring.
 From chord to chord the bounding echo flies,
 Innumerable raptures fill the skies.
 In vast variety his Fiddle speaks,
 And vents his soul into a thousand breaks;
 Takes a vast scope, and fills the spacious round,
 And proudly triumphs in unequal sound:
 In a full chorus, all at last consent;
 Then waits an answer, and expects th' event.

The Bird already wonders had perform'd,
 Yet still her glowing breast ambition warm'd:
 Again collects her strength, again will try,
 Resolv'd to conquer, or prepar'd to die.
 In vain the combat she again renews;
 In vain the complicated song pursues;
 In vain her little bosom swells to time,
 Or, with her native force, such height wou'd
 climb;

Puzzl'd and lost in labyrinths of sound,
 Is in a whirl of rapt'rous music drown'd.
 Unequal to the mighty task, she fails;
 Great is her courage, but her grief prevails:
 Reluctant yields a triumph hardly won,
 And gives one deep, melodious, dying groan
 Drops on his Fiddle, and resigns her breath.
 A noble sepulchre! a glorious death!

At what cou'd such an emulation aim?
 At what, but conquest and a future fame?
 Who can the depth of forming nature tell!
 Or who imagine, in an animal,
 There shou'd such gen'rous seeds of glory dwell!

VIII. OF

VIII. OF THE ROBIN-RED-BREAST.

The Description and Character.

THIS Bird, denominated from its red breast, is so well known all over this kingdom, that a minute description of him is not necessary.

The eyes and upper part of the bill are encompassed with a fine deep red, or orange colour, like that upon the breast; the upper parts of the body are of a dusky brown, shaded with a greenish olive colour, with a pale bluish line upon the neck; the belly whitish, the legs and feet of a dusky black.

This bird in some places is esteemed a very fine song-bird, and little inferior to the Nightingale; but in many other places very little notice is taken of him. The Cock has a sweet melodious voice, so free and shrill, that very few birds can equal it. His own natural song, because it is an exceeding good one, is preferable to any that can be taught him.

In the Winter time, when there is scarcity of meat in the fields, to seek his food he will enter into houses, with much confidence, being a very bold bird, sociable and familiar with man, but not with any bird besides his own mate.

In the Summer, when there is plenty of food in the fields, and he is not pinched with cold, he will withdraw himself into the most desert places, where he generally builds his nest, being a solitary kind of bird, that loves to feed singly, and lives upon worms, ants, their eggs and other insects,

ROBIN RED BREAST



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sects, &c. Notwithstanding, these birds are said to withdraw from houses into the woods in the Summer-time, as indeed most of them do; yet are there a great many that breed and harbour about farm-yards and out-houses, all the year through.

The distinguishing Marks of the Cock and Hen.

THE Cock may be known by his breast, being of a deeper red than the Hen's, and the red going up farther upon the head, and some say by the colour of his legs, which are darker, and by certain hairs which grow on each side of his bill: the bright red breast is a mark that may be depended upon, the others do not always hold. The Cock is likewise of a darker olive upon the upper surface of his whole body.

The Time and Manner of building their Nest.

The ROBIN breeds in the Spring, and commonly three times a-year, viz. April, May, and June. The Hen builds her nest on the side of a ditch or bank, amongst thorns and briars, or hedges; likewise in the woods which they haunt in Summer. Those that stay about farm-yards build in out-houses, and broken walls of old buildings; her nest is made of coarse materials, the out-side of dry green moss, intermixed with coarse wool, small dry'd sticks, straws, leaves, peelings from young trees and other dry'd stuff,
lined

lined with a few horse-hairs, on which she lays five or six eggs, but sometimes no more than four, of a cream colour, sprinkled all over with fine redish yellow spots at the blunt end, so thick that they appear almost in one.

Of the Young.

How to order and bring them up.

You may take them at ten or twelve days old; if you let them lye too long, they are apt to be fullen, and consequently much more troublesome to bring up; put them in a little basket with soft hay at the bottom, be sure they lye warm especially in the night.

Feed them with sheep's heart and egg, or other lean flesh made into a soft paste, as ordered for young Nightingales; let their meat be minced very small, well cleansed from skin, sinews, fat or strings, giving them but little at a time; for, if you overload their tender stomachs, it will disorder the birds.

When you find them begin to be strong, put them in a cage like the Nightingale or Wood-Lark, which should be closer wired, and let them have dry moss or fine gravel at the bottom, and in all respects keep and order them like the Nightingale. When they feed themselves, you may try them with Wood-Lark's meat, because some of these birds like it better than the Nightingale's. I think both together agree best with them; for they love variety of food: they are also great lovers of mould full of ants or other insects at the bottom of their cage.

Their

Their Diseases and Cures.

THE want of keeping these birds clean and neat, often occasions the many diseases they are subject to, and makes them never thrive nor delight in themselves.

This bird is very subject to the cramp, and a giddiness of the head, which makes him often fall off from his perch upon his back, and it is present death, unless he has some help speedily given him.

As for the cramp, the best remedy to prevent it is, to keep him warm and clean in his cage; that his feet be not clogged, whereby the joints are frequently taken off, and the dung is so fast bound on, that it makes his nails and feet rot off, which takes away the very life and spirit of the bird.

If you perceive him drooping and sickly, give him three or four meal-worms, or worms taken out of pidgeon-houses, and a few spiders, which will purge and cleanse him well, and it will mightily refresh him.

But, for the giddiness of the head, give him six or seven ear-wigs in a week, and he will never be troubled with it.

If you find he has little appetite to eat, give him, now and then, six or seven hog-lice, which may be found in any piece of old rotten wood, and let him never want water that is fresh, two or three times a-week.

There are many kinds of insects that birds will eat greedily, and very probably would relieve them under such maladies, could they be conveniently procured at all times, such as young
E smooth

smooth caterpillars, (a Robin will not touch a hairy one) some sorts of spiders, ants, &c. but there is no insect that is more innocent, or agrees better with birds in general, than the meal-worm, which may be had with little trouble at the meal-shops almost at any time.

Above all, to prevent these diseases, be sure to keep them very clean and warm, always putting soft dry gravel in the bottom of their cages, taking care never to let them want fresh water and wholesome food.

And to make your Robin chearful, give him once a-week in his water a blade or two of saffron, and a slice of liquorice, which will make him long-winded, and help him very much in his song.

Notwithstanding the above directions for bringing up this fine bird, considering they are very tender, and not easily raised, I would rather advise you to catch one with the trap-cage; and if you fall upon a young Cock-bird, he will sing in a few days, and be as good, if not better, than these brought up from the nest. Of this I have the experience just now in one taken with a trap, that sung his whole notes very freely within eight days after he was caught, and was as familiar as any bird brought up from the nest.

They are likewise taken with lime-twigs, but with a trap-cage, and a meal-worm or two, many may be taken in a day.

You are to feed and order them in every respect as before directed, and be ever mindful of keeping them clean and warm, which will prevent many disorders they are subject to.

This bird when taken old, if you find him full at first, and not to eat his meat so freely, then give him a few worms cut small amongst a
little

OF SINGING BIRDS.

51

little fresh earth, crumbs of bread, &c. always leaving his constant meat beside him in the cage, and in two or three days he will take his meat freely enough.

As to the extent of this bird's life, he seldom lives above seven years, by reason he is so subject to the falling sickness, cramp, and oppression of the stomach.

E 2

T H E

T H E

Invitation to a ROBIN-RED-BREAST:

A

P O E M.

DOMESTIC bird, when Wintry blasts,
 To seek for human aid compell,
 To me for warmth and shelter fly,
 Welcome beneath my roof to dwell:
 Supplies, thy hunger to relieve,
 I'll daily at my window lay,
 Assur'd that daily those supplies,
 With grateful song thou wilt repay,
 Soon as the new returning Spring
 Shall call thee forth to woods and groves,
 Freely re-visit then the scene,
 Which notes as sweet as thine approves,
 But if another Winter's frost,
 Shou'd bring me back my guest again,
 Again with music come prepar'd,
 Thy friendly host to entertain.
 The secret pow'r of harmony
 In this, its best effect, appears,
 That friendship, in the strictest bands,
 It both engages and endears.
 In music's ravishing delights,
 You feather'd folks with men agree:
 Of all the animated world,
 The only harmonists are we.

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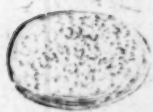


P. 73

COMMON WREN



Cock



Hen & Egg



IX. OF THE COMMON WREN.

The Description and Character.

THIS is the smallest bird, that I know of, found in this kingdom: it weighs about three drachms; its length, from the point of the bill to the end of the tail, is about four inches.

It commonly creeps about hedges and holes, making but short flights, and, if it be driven from the hedges, may easily be tired and run down.

It will sit upon a barn or tree, &c. about farm-yards, where it mostly frequents, and sing exceeding fine; when kept in a cage, it will sing very sweetly, and with a higher and louder voice than can be imagined for its strength and bigness, being a very pleasant bird, that will sing a great many months in the year.

Some persons have kept these birds a long time in a cage, and have had them to sing as stout as if they were in the fields.

The distinguishing marks of the Cock and HEN.

THE Cock is of a dark colour; the head, neck, and upper parts of the body, are of a mix'd brown; the throat of paleish yellow; the breast more inclined to white, the belly of a dusky coloured red; the tips of the wings, and covert feathers of the tail, are beautifully variegated with a few yellowish and blackish spots upon them, and are brighter than these on the Hen.

The Hen-bird is all over of a redish brown colour, excepting the lines a-crofs her tail and wings, which are black and redish.

The bird with the largest eye is generally thought to be a Cock. The difference in those birds, while young, can hardly be known, till the Cock begins to record and sing.

The Time and Manner of building their Nest.

THE WREN has young ones in May; she builds her nest sometimes in the holes of old walls, and frequently in the eaves of thatch'd houses, such as stables, or other out-houses, but more commonly in woods and hedges, in a very artificial manner: it is of a sort of oval form resembling an egg, covered over at top, and hath in the middle of the side a small round hole to go in and out at. The outside is of green moss and fog, the inside of hair, wool, and feathers, on which the Hen lays sometimes to the number of fifteen or sixteen eggs; but many times hatches not half that number: they are very small white eggs, sprinkled all over with small red spots.

Of the Young.

How to order and bring them up.

Let them be very well feathered before you take them; they are to be fed, and reared like the young Nightingales and Robins, giving them but little at a time, one or two very small bits.

When they are grown fit for a cage, let them have

have a large one, made with very close wire, with three sides wood, and one side wire; it requires to be lined with a cloth or bays for keeping them warm: though it is a very small bird, yet a small cage does not agree with it, nor with any bird whatsoever, though it is often practised.

In the Winter time especially, you must take care to keep them very warm and clean, giving them often dry gravel in their cage. Keep them constantly to the Nightingale's food, and there is no question but they will answer your expectation.

If at any time they are sick, give them two or three flies, or a small spider or two, but not too many insects.

X. OF THE RED-START.

The Description and Character.

THIS bird is so named from its red tail, and is in size something less than the Robin-red-breast.

It is said to be of so fullen a nature, that if taken old, and not brought up from the nest, it will not for some days look at its meat, and it will be so vexed, as is hardly credible: but, if brought up young, they become gentle and tame, being of a chearful spirit, and have a very pretty melodious kind of whistling song. It is thought, they come with the Nightingale to England in the Summer, and go away again in the Winter.

The distinguishing marks of the COCK
and HEN.

THE Cock is very fair, beautifully coloured, and exceeding pleasant to the eye. His breast, rump, and tail, are of a fine red; the back, neck, and hind-part of the head, of a lead colour; the fore-part of his head, and throat, of a jet black, and has a white mark upon his pole.

The Hen is a beautiful bird likewise; but partakes more of the colour of the Nightingale, with a red tail, something fainter than the Cock's.

The Cock is known at all times from the Hen, by his black head; this mark being peculiar to the male only.

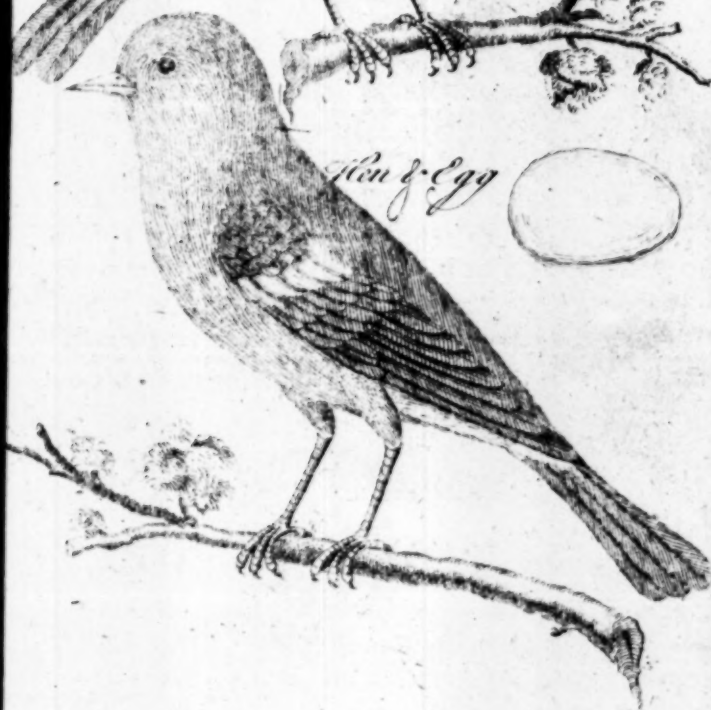
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RED START

Cock



Hen & Egg



F.R. Sculp.

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The time and manner of building their Nest.

THESE birds breed in May, and have young ones fit to be taken about the middle of that month. They commonly build their nest in holes of trees, or under house eaves, and make their nest with all sorts of things, such as dry grafs, small roots of herbs, leaves, horse-hair, wool, and such as the place affords them. Their eggs are like these of the Hedge-sparrow's, but of a paler blue, and not so big.

With regard to their nest, they are the shyest of all birds; for, if they perceive you to mind them when they are building, they will forsake their nest; and, if you touch any of their eggs, they never come to the nest any more; for you can scarce go to it, but the Hen will immediately spy you; and if she should chance to have young ones, she will either starve, or throw them out of the nest, and break their necks, as has been often found by experience.

Of the Young.

How to order and bring them up.

THEY must be taken out of the nest, at about ten days old; for if left there too long, they are apt to learn some of the old bird's temper, and be very fullen.

Feed them with sheep's heart and egg, minced very small, as the Nightingale or Robin, giving them but little at a time; for if you clog their
stomachs

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stomachs, they'll presently cast their meat, and die in a short time.

When you perceive them begin to eat their meat, cage them singly, putting thereunto a pan; and about the sides of the cage, cease not, tho' they feed themselves, to give them a bit or two, three or four times a-day; for they will hardly eat their fill for a long time, when they begin to feed alone: but when you have used them to eat five or six days without feeding, give them some paste, and you will find them delight much therein.

They may be kept in what cage you please; only let them be kept warm in the Winter, and they will sing in the night, as well as the day; and will learn to whistle and imitate other birds.

When wild, they feed upon insects like the Robin, &c.

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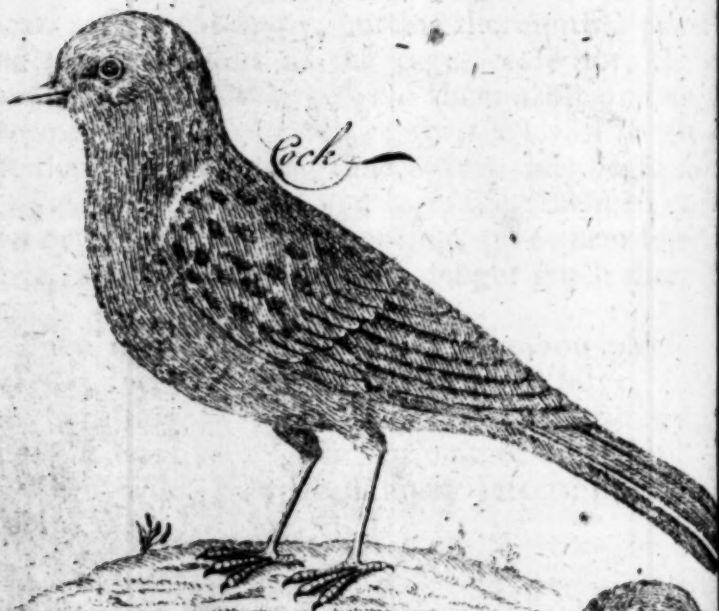
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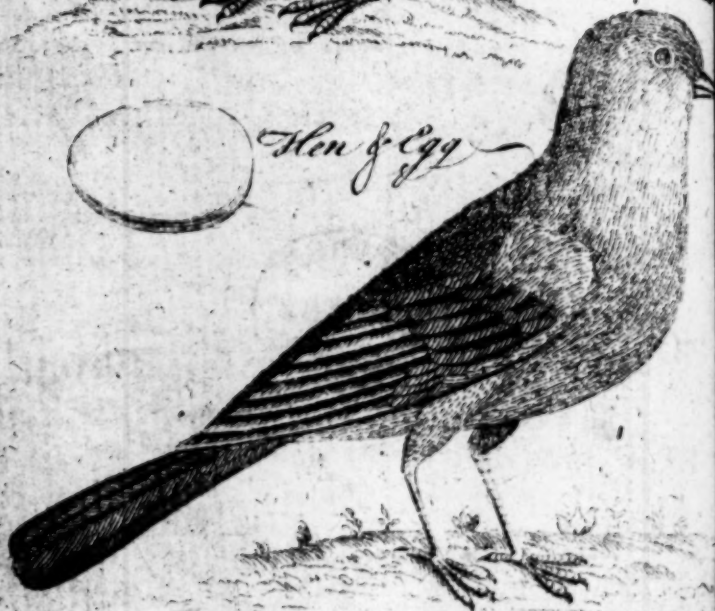
I. Of



HEDGE SPARROW



Cock



Hen & Egg

XI. OF THE HEDGE-SPARROW.

The Description and Character.

THIS bird is considerably less than the common Sparrow; it has a pretty long slender bill, of a dusky or bluish colour, and so well known; that a long description of him is unnecessary; there is hardly a boy that searches the hedges, but can give an account of its nest, eggs, &c.

This is not so despicable a bird as a great many imagine; yet no bird is more despised than the Hedge-Sparrow, tho' it ought to be more valued: for, if you mind its song, you will find very delightful notes in it. They are exceeding pleasant song birds, that sing sweetly, and have a great variety of delightful pretty notes; they sing very early in the Spring, and are frequently kept in cages by curious persons, who value them much for their fine singing.

It is plenty that lessens the worth of this bird, as of every thing else, though ever so valuable of itself. A great many people cage worse, and account them good birds.

The distinguishing marks of the C o c k
and H E N.

THE Cock's head is of a dusky coloured brown, with a sort of bluish cast; the upper part of his body is of a dark brown, with a very small mixture, or rather shade of red; the breast of a
bluish

bluish or lead colour, with a few small shady spots upon it; the belly more dusky.

The Hen is known from the Cock, being considerably paler upon the breast, and the colour upon her back more bright.

The Time and Manner of building their Nest.

THEY have young ones generally about the latter end of April or beginning of May, and, as mentioned before, build their nest almost in every hedge, low and open, that it may be found with little difficulty. It consists chiefly of fine green moss, and the inside lined with a little hair, on which the Hen lays commonly five eggs, much different from other birds, being of a pale blue or sea-green colour.

Of the Young.

How to order and bring them up.

THESE birds may be taken at nine or ten days old, and fed with bread and flesh-meat, chopped very fine and mixed together, made moist, as for other birds; or you may bring them up with the Wood-Lark's victuals.

Old or young birds of this kind become tame very quickly, and will sing in a short time after they are taken, if they have been taken at the latter end of January, or beginning of February: they will feed almost on any thing you can give them.

The

The Hedge-sparrow is a very tractable bird, and will learn to pipe, whistle, or imitate the song of almost any other bird, if brought up from the nest.

DIRECTIONS

How to make a paste for mixing with all sorts of soft-beak'd bird's meat; such as live on soft food, *viz.* The Black-Bird, Thrush, Starling, Sky-Lark, Wood-Lark, Nightingale, Robin, Wren, &c.

TO make this paste, take half a peck of the finest horse-beans, being very dry, and ground fine; then bould it through a fine boulder, such as is used for wheating flour; or, if your stock of birds do not require so great a quantity, take in the following proportion:

Of the said meal, two pounds, with one pound of the best sweet almonds blanched; beat these well in a mortar, as fine as possible; then put four ounces of fresh butter, that is entirely without any salt, into a sauce-pan well tinned; mix all well together, and set the pan over a clear fire, that the paste may not smell of smoak, continually stirring of it whilst it stands upon the fire; then take four yolks of eggs, and a little saffron: when the butter is all melted, having some virgin's-honey ready, drop in some by degrees, continually stirring it, to keep it from burning; and that all the ingredients may incorporate, then strain it through a drainer, or sieve, made with holes, such as will let the whole composition

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pafs, which should be pretty thin; and for the keeping of it, put it up in a pot of lime-ware, with a little melted clarified honey upon the top; then cover it close up, and so you have store of provisions for many months.

This paste may be mixed with any bird-meat whatsoever, being a very strengthening cleansing diet; and is ready at all times when once made, and will continue good for six months.

In the Winter time, take a pretty good quantity of saffron, and mingle with the paste; for it is hot and opening, and will maintain the bird more chearful and lively.

Many other sorts of paste may be made like this, of less charge, as, instead of almonds, to use walnuts, &c.

S U M M E R.

A

P O E M.

THE flow'ry May, who from her green lap
throws,

The yellow cowslip, and the pale primrose ;
See Nature hastes her earliest wreathes to bring,
With all the incense of the breathing Spring.

In that soft season, when descending show'rs
Call forth the greens, and wake the rising flow'rs.

When op'ning buds salute the welcome day,
And earth relenting, feels the genial ray :

The beauteous landscape, ravishingly gay,
With love and joy, inspires the tender lay.

In sweet confusion Nature's charms appear,
With ev'ry glory of the smiling year.

Hear how the birds on ev'ry bloomy spray,
With joyous music, wake the dawning day.

Why sit we mute, when early linnets sing,
When warbling Philomel salutes the Spring.

Then sing by turns, by turns the Muses sing,
Now hawthorns blossom, now the daisies spring.

Now leaves the trees, and flow'rs adorn the
ground :

Begin : the vales shall echo to the sound.

But, when you sing the greens and op'ning glades,
And give us harmony as well as shades ;

A Titian's hand might draw the grove, but you
Can paint the grove, and add the music too.

XIII. OF THE CANARY-BIRD.

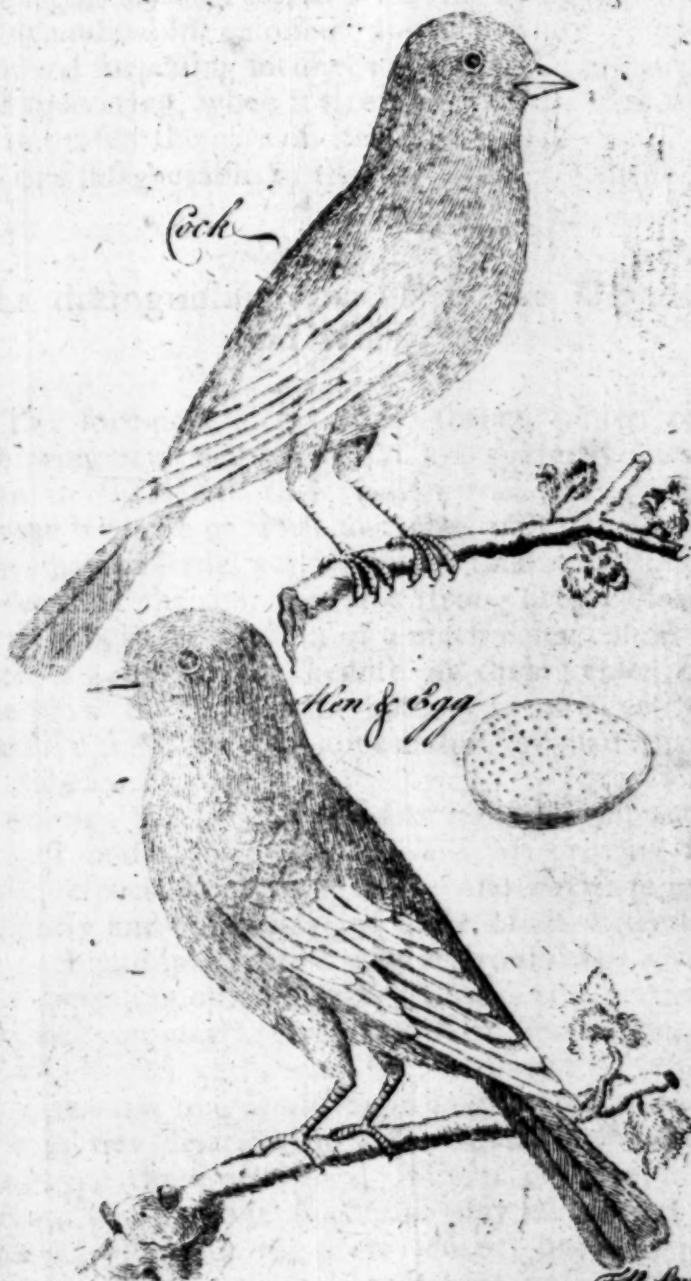
Who can refuse their voice, when all things join,
To fill the soul with harmony divine.

The Description and Character.

THIS bird has its name from an island of the Atlantic sea, being one of those which the ancients, for the excellent temperature of the air, called *Fortunate* : All those islands, which they so named, are now called the Canaries ; from whence these birds were first brought into Europe, and from no other place. They were first carried into Italy, then into several parts of France and Germany, &c. where they undertook the breeding of them, and bred them in abundance, and to great perfection. They, for many years, have supplied all Europe, part of Asia, Africa, and America, with these beautiful little creatures ; and each of these countries have improved the brood : for what are there produced, exceed the birds brought from their original native climate, both in beauty and song ; among which, those bred in Scotland, England, and Ireland, are not inferior to the best, being of a more hardy nature, and better for breeding, than those of most other countries, and as good in song ; being hardy, straight, sprightly, bold birds, having as beautiful a plumage as the best of their kind in Europe.

The Cock Canary-bird hath an exceeding shrill sweet note, which, at one breath, will continue without intermission for a long time, rising higher
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CANARY BIRD



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and higher by degrees, and varying its notes with a fine musical inflexion of voice, in a very pleasant and surprising manner: the sound is so sharp and quavering, when it stretches its little throat, as to deafen the ears of its hearers, and thereby become disagreeable to them.

The distinguishing marks of the Cock and Hen.

THE fore-part of his head, throat, pinion of the wing and rump, are of a brighter yellow than in the Hen: these marks will hold good, let the birds be of what sort they will: they always have a little yellow above their bills, and under their throats, &c. of a strong deep yellow in the Cock; in the Hen of a much paler colour: there is a difference likewise in their vents; if you blow the feathers in both, you may easily perceive the Cock's to appear longer than that of the Hen.

Another mark is, of his size: the biggest and longest bodied bird seldom fails of proving a Cock, especially if his gesture and carriage be sprightly and majestic; and if he often extends his neck and head with life and vigour, then you may depend upon its being a Cock-bird: besides all this, you may know him by his fine singing, in which you can't well be deceived; for the Hen does not sing at all, or so indifferently, that it does not deserve the name of a song: and whenever the Cock sings, if you observe his throat, you'll see it swell and play all the time he is warbling out his pretty notes; but let the Hen sing either well or ill, this motion is never

F 3

observed

observed in her throat. This one remark will be sufficient to direct you to choose a Cock-bird at all times, when you will find, for the generality, all the other marks to correspond likewise.

To order them in breeding, &c.

CANARY-BIRDS that are kept tame will breed three or four times in the year; they usually begin in April, and breed in May, and June, sometimes in July, or August.

There are many people in England, as well as in France and other countries, that get good livelihoods by breeding Canary-birds; besides, a great number of persons breed them only for pleasure.

Whether for pleasure or profit, chuse such birds for breeding as are strong, healthful, stout birds.

If the Cock or Hen be very small, match either the one or the other with a larger; as a small yellow sort, with a large mealy one, &c, which will strengthen the brood.

Towards the middle of March or sooner, begin to match your birds, putting one Cock and one Hen in a small cage; and when they have been so long together, that they are perfectly reconciled and well pleased with each other, then, towards the end of March, or beginning of April, put them into the breeding cage, made for that use; and the larger it be, the better, that the birds may have the more room to fly and exercise themselves. Let there be two boxes in the cage for the Hen to build in, because she will sometimes hatch a second brood, before the first
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are fit to fly, leaving the care of them to the Cock, to feed and bring up, whilst she breeds in the other box; therefore, if she has not a spare box to build in, she will be apt to make her nest upon the young birds, and smother them, as it sometimes happens, or build so near that they will spoil one another.

Whilst your birds are a-pairing, feed them with soft meat, egg, bread, maw-feed, and a little scalded rap-feed: when they begin to carry stuff for building, give them once a-day, or every other day at farthest, a few greens, and a little coarse sugar, to cause a slipperiness in the body of the Hen, that so the eggs may come forth without injuring the bird; for they often die in laying their first egg.

When they have young ones, give the same soft victuals fresh every day, and let them have fresh greens likewise, such as cabbage or lettuce; but give them more constantly chick-weed and ground-sel, with the seeds upon it; towards June, shepherd's-purse, in July and August, plantain.

It is to be recommended to such persons as breed only a few birds for their pleasure, to use large cages, it being much the best way, that they may have room to fly; for exercise is good, and they love it: be sure you don't fail of giving them fresh greens, and soft meat every morning, for they cannot feed their young without it.

Those that intend to breed a number, should prepare a room for that purpose.

Let the situation of it be such, that the birds may enjoy the benefit of the morning sun, which is both delightful and nourishing: let wire instead of glass be at the windows, especially in the summer-time, that they may have the advantage of the air, which will add to their health, and make them

them thrive the better: keep the floor of the room clean, sometimes lifting fine dry gravel or sand upon it, and duly remove the dung and other foul stuff. You must take care to fix nest-boxes, and back-cages in every convenient corner and place of the room, at least, twice the number that you have birds, that they may have the more variety to chuse a lodging to their minds; for some love to build high, and some low; some in a light place, and others will chuse a dark place to build in.

There ought to be two windows in the room, one at each end, and several perches, at proper distances, for the birds to settle upon, as they fly backward and forward. You may set likewise a tree in some convenient place of the room; it will divert the birds, and some of them will like to build in it. You must observe that their nest be secure from falling through, and, if in danger to tie the tree closer to prevent it, and they will hatch there as well as in any other place; or you may, when the whin-bushes are green, and the flower on them, (if they can be had) hing a few of them at proper distances in the room, which will do as well, being close and very proper for their building; and you will find them very ready to do so. Remember, not to put too many birds together; eight or ten pair are enough for any ordinary size of a room.

When your birds are first paired, as directed before, turn them into this room, where they will live, as it were, a conjugal life; and, notwithstanding, there are several male and female birds in the same room, one Cock and one Hen, as they first couple, will keep constant to each other, and both concur and assist in hatching and feeding their young; for the Cock-bird takes his

turn

turn in building the nest, sitting upon the eggs, and feeding the young, as well as the Hen.

Of their Nest.

And how to order the Young.

You must furnish them with stuff for making their nest, such as fine hay, wool, cotton, and elk's-hair, if it can be got: let all these materials be thoroughly dry, then mix and tye them up together in a net, or some such thing, that they may easily pull it out as they want it; and let it be hung in a proper place in the cage or room, for that purpose.

They build a pretty nest, about which they will sometimes be so industrious as to begin and finish it in one day. The Hen lays commonly four or five eggs, and sits fourteen days.

When the young are hatched, leave them to the care of the old birds to nurse and bring up, till they can fly and feed themselves. The Hen, by reason of their rankness, in being kept together, and provided with all things necessary at hand, without any trouble in seeking their food, &c. will sometimes build and hatch again before the first brood can shift for themselves, the care of which she transfers to the Cock-bird, who will feed and nurse them himself, supplying the office of both parents: when this happens, or you think they have more young ones than they can bring up, you are to take care and feed the young, two or three times a-day, till they are grown up, and able to provide for themselves; which often prevents their being starved, and makes them thrive and very tame.

IF

If you have a mind to bring them up by hand, take them at ten or twelve days old; feed them as the Linnet, &c. soak rap-feed ten or twelve hours in clean water, then pour off your water, and let it boil up in more clean water; then scum and strain it, bruise it very small, and clean as many of the hulls from it as you can; then take a piece of the best white bread, first soak it in clean water, then boil it in a little milk; strain the milk from it, till it be pretty thick, making but little at a time, that they may have it always fresh every day.

When they begin to feed themselves, take them from the old ones, and cage them; let their meat be the yolk of an egg hard boil'd, with as much of the best bread, and a little scalded rap-feed; when it is boiled soft, bruise the feed fine, and put a little maw-feed among it, mix all together, and give them a sufficient quantity fresh every day; be careful never to let it be stale or sour, it gives them a looseness and kills them. Besides this, give them a little scalded rap-feed, and a little rap and canary by itself. You may keep them to this diet till they have done moulting; then put them in separate cages, and afterwards feed them as you do the old ones, with two thirds canary, and one third rap-feed; you may give them a little hemp-feed, but not too much, for it is a very bad feed, if you give them too much: it will make them rotten, moult black, and shorten their lives, but a little sometimes will enliven and cherish them. Keep them to this food, taking away their soft meat, unless at any time they are sick, then continue it.

Of

Of the CANARY-BIRD's Diseases,
and their Cure.

BESIDES their moulting, which is common to all birds, they are subject to the following disorders:

The first is a surfeit, occasioned either by a violent cold, or from eating too greedily upon greens; especially on a rank sort of chick-weed, with broad leaves, and without seeds, which is hurtful both to old and young birds, it being very apt to surfeit them. To discover when the bird has this distemper, blow the feathers on the belly, and you will perceive it swelled, transparent, full of little red veins, all its little bowels sinking down to the extreme parts of its body, and, if far gone, black, which generally brings death. The cure of this disease, if taken in time, is to keep him warm, and give him whole oat-meal amongst his seed for three or four days, in order to cleanse him; and put liquorish in his water; but if he is too loose, instead of oat meal, give him maw, and bruised hemp-seed, being more binding: and at the same time, let him have a little saffron in his water, or you may give him milk and bread, with a little maw-seed in it, 'tis very good for the bird at such a time; or you may take millêt, hemp, maw, rap, and canary-seeds, of each as much as will lye upon a sixpence, let these just boil up, rinse them in cold water to cool them, then boil a new laid egg hard, mince it small, both yolk and white together, take about a quarter of it and put to the seeds, and add as much more lettice-seed, as any of the other; give this meat to the sick bird, it has a good effect on many. But before you give him this, in the morning early, let your bird
drink

drink two or three times water, in which you have put about the quantity of two drops of treacle; and, when you have observed him to drink two or three times, take it away, and give him clean water again; repeat this three or four mornings before you give him the above-mentioned composition.

Another disease the Canary-bird is troubled with, is a little pimple on his rump, called the pip; it will generally go away of itself, but, if at any time it is bad, and will not, when it is ripe, let out the putrid matter with the point of a fine needle, squeeze it all out with as much gentleness as you can, after which, a bit of loaf-sugar moistened in your mouth being put on the sore, will heal it.

A third disease is, a kind of yellow scabs that come about their head and eyes, which sometimes swell, and are full of matter; anoint these places with fresh butter, lard, or the oil of sweet almonds, those things will cure it unless it spread, then, nothing but time, and cooling food, will carry it off.

The last thing I shall take notice of, is his moulting; you may know when this comes, by the birds appearing rough, melancholy, and often sleeping in the day, with his head under his wings, and the cage covered with down and small feathers; for the young ones, the first year, cast only their down, and small feathers; and the second, their tail and wing feathers.

Careful nursing is the principal means to preserve birds under this natural malady; therefore, be sure to keep them warm, set them sometimes in the sun, when it shines powerfully, to bask themselves, it will comfort them very much; at the same time, taking care to keep them from cold

OF SINGING BIRDS. 73

told or wind, which are very prejudicial to them at such a time; let them have good nourishing food, bread and egg mixed together, and put saffron in their water, likewise bruised hemp-seed mixed with lettuce and maw-seed. If the weather is very hot when the birds are in their moult, give them liquorish in their water, instead of saffron, and in their meat plantain and lettuce seed, but none of that meat, if it be cold weather: remember, whenever egg is prescribed for any sick bird, it is to be boiled and chopped, or grated very fine, hemp-seed ground or bruised, and rap or Canary-seed scalded and bruised.

These things, with good attendance, will, at all times, contribute very much to the relief of these sick birds.

N. B. For further particulars of this fine Bird, vid. APPENDIX.

On the CANARY-BIRD :

A

P O E M.

DELIGHTFUL, airy, skipping thing,
To charm by nature taught ;
How canst thou thus imprison'd sing,
And swell thy downy throat !

Divine would be the poet's lays,
Breath'd with that melting air,
With which thy warbling voice repays,
Thy bounteous feeder's care.

Had but those forests Orpheus drew,
Clos'd in their shades a bird,
Of equal harmony with you,
No tree of taste had stirr'd.

The groves had listen'd to the tongue
Of their own feather'd choir ;
Nor on the vocal strings had hung,
But on their boughs, the lyre.



GOLD FINCH

Cock*Hen & Egg**F.R. Sclp*

XIII. OF THE GOLD-FINCH;
which in some places, from its feeding on the Seeds of Thistles, is called THISTLE-FINCH.

The gaudy Gold-Finch, of his plumage proud,
Mimics the Beau, gay, flutt'ring, vain and loud;
Round his coquet the foppish mimic flies,
'Turns on his heel, and ev'ry gesture tries.

The Description and Character.

IT is something larger than the Canary-bird, and is a straight handsome shap'd bird, has a straight sharp ash-coloured bill, and the eyes of a hazel colour. The length of a full grown bird, from the tip of the bill to the point of the tail, is five inches and a half, of which the latter is two, and the former little more than half an inch long; when in flesh, it weighs about an ounce.

This bird is every where in this kingdom well known, and deservedly highly esteemed, both for singing, and the elegance of its colours, being certainly the most beautiful and finest feathered of all cage-birds; a ring of curious scarlet-coloured feathers encompass the fore-part of his head, or basis of the bill, and from the eyes to the bill on each side is drawn a black line, the jaws or cheeks white, the top of the head black, from which a broad black line is extended on both sides, almost to the neck; the hinder-part of the head is white; the neck, and fore-part of the back are of a redish ash-colour; the rump, breast, and sides of the same, but a little paler; the belly

ly whitish, the wings and tail black; only the tips of the principal feathers in both are white; besides, the wings are adorned with a most beautiful transverse stroak of yellow or gold colour.

I should not have been so particular in describing the colours of this bird, but I think, the great variety that Nature has painted it with, wherein it excels all small birds, at least, what are found in this part of the world, make it deserving of the best character that can be given it; yet, by reason of age, sex, or other accidents, they sometimes vary from these colours.

And yet, what adds more to their beauty, is their mild gentle nature, as may even hence appear, that presently after they are caught, without using any art or care, they will fall to their meat and drink; nor are they so affrighted at the presence of a man, as most other birds use to be, nor very much troubled at their confinement in a cage; for, if they have continued there but some time, they like it so well, that, tho' you let them loose in the room, they will not fly away, but, when scared, fly directly to their cage for shelter, as I have proved by experience.

They are called in some places, Draw-waters, from their aptness to learn to draw their water when they want to drink, in a little bucket, fastened to a small chain made for that purpose; there is no bird will learn to draw their water like the Gold-Finch; it is astonishing to see with what dexterity these little creatures will pull up their buckets, drink, and throw it down again, and lift up the lid of a small box with their bill, to come at their meat, &c. They are wonderfully delighted with viewing themselves in a glass, fixed to the back of their bucket-board, where they will sit upon their perch, pruning and dress-

sing

sing themselves with the greatest care imaginable, often looking in the glass, and placing every feather in the nicest order: no lady can take greater pleasure, or be more nice in dressing herself, than this little beautiful Bird is in rectifying all disorders in his plumé, not suffering a feather to lye amiss.

The Gold-Finch is a long-liv'd bird; they fly in flocks or companies, and delight much to feed upon the seeds of thistle, teasel, hemp, dock, &c.

The distinguishing marks of the Cock and HEN.

THE Cock is distinguished from the Hen, by the feathers on the ridge of the wings, which are a fine jet-black, quite up to the shoulder; whereas in the Hen, tho' they appear black, they are of a gray or dusky ash-colour, when compared to those of the Cock: he is browner on the back and the sides of the breast; the red, yellow, and all his colours, are much brighter than those of the Hen. These are constant infallible marks, by which the Cock may be known from the Hen, either in old or young birds; besides, the Hen hath a smaller note, and sings little or none at all.

The time and manner of building their Nest.

THEY begin to build in April, when the fruit-trees are in blossom: as they excel all our other

small birds in beauty of feathers, so do they likewise in art; their nest is not only very small, but exceeding pretty; the outside consists of very fine moss, curiously interwoven with other soft materials; the inside lined with delicate fine down, wool, &c. on which the Hen lays six or seven white eggs, speckled with a redish brown.

To find their nest is not very easy; for they generally build in fruit-trees, viz. apple, pear, plumb, &c. sometimes in thorns and hedges, but most commonly in the apple-tree, pretty high upon the branches, where either the blossom or leaves interrupt our sight; and at such a time, when we cannot come at them, without the hazard of damaging the bloom or young fruit.

Of the Young.

How to order and bring them up.

THEY are tender birds to bring up from the nest, therefore should not be taken too soon; let them be pretty well feathered, they will not be fullen, like the young of many other birds, by staying too long in the nest. When you take them, prepare their meat after this manner; Soak white bread in water, strain it, and then boil it with a little milk, till it is turned pretty thick, adding to it a little flour of Canary-seed, with this meat feed them every two hours or oftener, giving them but little at a time; begin to feed them soon in the morning, and continue after this manner till about sun-setting; let them have fresh victuals every day. When you perceive them to pick about the cage, then begin to break them from this soft meat, by giving them Canary

and

and rap-feed, and a little of their soft meat besides, till they can feed themselves. When you find they feed pretty freely upon the feed, keep them constantly to that diet: tho' they are very greedy upon taking hemp-feed; yet it does not agree so well with them as the rap and Canary mixed together.

If a young Gold-Finch be brought up under the Canary-bird, the Wood-Lark, or any other fine song-bird, he will take their songs very readily. I heard of a lady, who had one of these birds that would have talked very distinctly.

A Cock-bird, bred from the nest, will couple with a Hen Canary-bird, and produce a brood between both kinds, partaking of the song, and colours of both.

These birds are taken almost at any time of the year, either with lime-twigs, trap-cages, or the day-net, in great numbers. The young take flight in June, July, or August; but the best time for catching them is about Michaelmas, with the trap-cage, and day-nets, when they frequent the fields where the thistle, and other seeds grow, as mentioned before. They are easily caught, being of so gentle and familiar a nature, and will both feed and sing presently: when you first take them, give them Canary, and a little hemp-feed; or some of the same they love to feed upon in the fields, such as the thistle, which should always be kept by you, to give them a head of now and then, as directed before; keep them on Canary, and the best rap-feed mixed together, which is more wholesome, and agrees better with them; for hemp-feed spoils their colour, and Canary-feed preserves it.

Their

Their Diseases and Cures.

THIS, as I observed before, is a long-liv'd, and very healthful bird, that is seldom out of order; but when you find him droop, give him saffron in his water; if he has a scouring, crumble a little dry chalk in the bottom of his cage, or among his feed, or stick a bit between the wires of his cage, and put gravel at the bottom, and give him a little thistle-feed, which may be found in the great thistle, at the bottom of a white down, or other seeds which they delight upon when in the fields.

Such as eat hemp-seed to purge them, should have the seeds of melons succory, lettuce, and plantain-seeds for that purpose.

When there is no need of purging, give them, two or three times a-week, a little sugar or loam in their meat, or at the bottom of the cage; for all seeds have an oiliness; so that if they have not something to dry it up, in length of time, it spoils their stomach, and puts them into a flux, which is of dangerous consequence.

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BULL FINCH

(Cock)*Hen & Egg**T. R. S. 1847*

XIV. OF THE BULL-FINCH.

The Description and Character.

THE BULL-FINCH at full growth, from the point of the bill to the tip of the tail, is six inches, of which the tail is two inches long; in weight, thirteen drachms: they have a black short bill, very strong and crooked, the upper part hanging over the under, like that of a hawk, the tongue short, and the eyes of a hazle colour; the head and neck, in proportion to the body, larger than in the generality of small birds, from which they may have their name. In some places, they are called Nopes, in others Thick-Bills, and in some, Hoops: this last name they have probably from their wild hooping sort of note.

They are very docile birds, and will nearly imitate the sound of a pipe or whistle of a man. The Hen learning after the pipe or whistle as well as the Cock; having no song of their own but what is taught them, in which they excel most birds; and the peculiar rarity of these birds is, that they never forget what they have once learned, though they hang among ever so many birds; some have been taught to speak several words very distinctly.

It is a bird much esteemed for beauty and singing; for in the former he equals most, and in the latter, when well taught, excells all small birds; they have been frequently sold from five to ten guineas a bird.

They are in many parts very scarce, which seems to be occasioned by a great many of them being

being shot by gardeners, and others, in the Spring-time, on account of their destroying the early buds of the fruit-trees, such as the apple, pear, peach, and other garden trees, of which they are exceeding fond; and, by that means, do great damage to the gardeners, who therefore hate and destroy them, as a great pest of their gardens. It is said in some parts of England, a reward is given by the church-wardens for every Bull-Finch that is killed; if so, that may be assigned as one reason of their scarcity, being less common than most other singing birds that breed in that country.

The distinguishing Marks of the Cock and Hen.

THE Cock is in bigness equal to the Hen, but hath a flatter crown, and excells her in the beauty of his colours; a lovely scarlet or crimson adorns his breast, the feathers on the crown of the head, and those that compass the bill, are of a brighter black than those of the Hen; part of the neck, shoulders, and back, are of a bluish ash-colour, shaded with red; the belly and rump white, some of the quill-feathers have their outward shafts red, and the inner of a fine glossy black; others have their exterior edges white, which makes a sort of white line or cross-bar upon each wing; the tail is of a shining black, the legs of a dusky colour, and the claws black.

If both are seen together, the one may very easily be known from the other, the colours in the Cock being much more resplendent than in the Hen; but whilst these birds are young, it is more difficult to distinguish them; one of the surest ways is, to pull a few feathers from their breast,

breast, when they are about three weeks old; and, in about ten or twelve days after, you will perceive the feathers, where you have pulled, to come of a curious red, if a Cock; if a Hen, they will come off a paelish brown.

The Time and Manner of building their Nest.

THE Bull-Finch breeds late in the Spring, seldom has young ones before the end of May, or beginning of June; she builds in an orchard, wood, or park, where there are plenty of trees; her nest is not very common to be found; it is an ordinary mean fabric, made with seemingly little art; on which she lays four or five eggs of a bluish colour, spotted at the biggest end, with large dark brown, and faint redish spots.

Of the Young.

How to order and bring them up.

THESE birds must not be taken too young, let them be well feathered first, at least twelve days old; keep them warm and clean: these birds when young, are fed as the Linnet, Chaffinch, &c. with bread, milk, and rap-feed, made into a paste; feed them every two hours from morning till night, making but little at a time, that they may have fresh victuals every day. When they are grown up, feed them with rap and Canary-seed, three-fourths rap, and one-fourth Canary; this is the best food you can feed them with.

If

If at any time you perceive them out of order, put a blade of saffron in their water; and you may try them with the Wood-Lark's meat, or fine hemp-seed; but keep mostly to rap and Canary-seed mixed together, the last of which is most acceptable to them.

You must remember frequently to pipe, whistle, or talk to them, whilst they are young, what you intend they should learn, and you will find them soon take it.

The BULL-FINCH and DAW:

A

F A B L E.

A BULL-FINCH, who his talents try'd
 With good success, but more of pride,
 As cobling, strutting, turkey vain,
 Each bird the mark of his disdain;
 Admir'd, and fear'd, where'er he sung,
 Perch'd near a daw, and thus begun:

See! joys complete on me bestow'd,
 With pers'nal charms, and parts endow'd;
 But feather'd sages sure agree,
 That Nature nodded, forming thee:
 Aukward, alert, with whims thy head,
 Mercurial mounts, but drops in lead:
 Thy shape, thy hue, our sight offends,
 Thy short, shrill accents, no commends?
 Not so absurd the hooting owl,
 But gravely he, thou pertly dull,

Abash'd the daw, with satire stung,
 Jabber'd and gnaw'd, and bit his tongue;
 To hollow tree his seat withdrew,
 Still sputt'ring anger as he flew.

With fickle wing, soon chang'd his place,
 A chimney cover'd his disgrace;
 Here fix'd, he scorns with heedless ear,
 The sounds that reach his hollow sphere.
 The titt'ring voice, or hasty calling,
 Dog's snap abrupt, or puss's squaling;
 Alternate fugues of scolding tongues,
 Or sem-briefs bray'd from asses lungs:
 With better strains, at length, he heard
 A pipe instruct a tutor'd bird;
 Catching the song with tuneful throat,

H

And

And echoing back each rival note.
 Thus charm'd, he, from his dark abode,
 Invited tries th' advent'rous road:
 Down-right he flounders on; his sight
 Is hid in momentary night.

But gloomy fears and perils ending,
 To spacious lightsome room descending;
 Behold, with what a glad surprize,
 Imprison'd there, the finch he spies,
 Swinging betwixt the floor and cieling,
 A cage, his pendent, airy dwelling.

A gilded ball shone o'er his head,
 Thick wires like rays around him spread:
 A turf beneath his foot was found,
 In miniature, a verdant ground;
 Seeds here conceal'd, there groundsel seen,
 There plantain stalks were wove between;
 Water, with streaks of saffron dy'd,
 Rich draughts from chrystal font supply'd.
 A show of blifs his state exprefs'd,
 Tho' splendid servitude at best.

But now what refuge or relief,
 Can hide his shame, or sooth his grief?
 While standing oft disclos'd before him,
 With hateful form, oft hov'ring o'er him;
 Clapping his sooty wings, his foe,
 Adds insults to the captive's woe.

Where's now, cries he, thy scorn or boast?
 What's wit, or beauty, freedom lost?
 Tho' gay thy prison, firm its hold;
 And fetters gall, tho' made of gold.
 Hence, warbling slave, be this thy strain,
 Thy excellence but proves thy bane:
 Whilst I in my defects am blifs'd,
 Thou still art wretched tho' carefs'd;
 The meanest thanks to Nature owe,
 And Chance can bring the vainest low.



CHAFFINCH



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XV. OF THE CHAFFINCH.

The Description and Character.

THE CHAFFINCH is a stout, hardy, well-known bird, being common almost in every tree or hedge; of the bigness of the Bull-Finch, very lavish in his song, and when brought up from the nest; or branchers, will sing six or eight months in the year; the wild, not above three months, and chiefly in breeding time; and some of these birds, when brought up under other sweet song-birds, prove good and valuable, and have been sold for three crowns, and a guinea a-bird; but the greater part is not worth keeping.

It is a custom among the bird-men, when they want to learn the Chaffinch, Linnet, &c. a song, to blind them when they are about three or four months old; which is done by putting out their eyes with a wire made almost red hot; because, as it is said, they will be more attentive, and learn the better; but I am sure it would be much better never to confine them in cages, than purchase their harmony by such usage. I think it is enough to deprive these little innocent creatures of liberty, for our pleasure and entertainment; but to put out their eyes to increase it, is exceedingly barbarous. If what they assign for this is true; yet the practice is cruel, and what no one, who has any tenderness in his nature, would ever be guilty of. These poor birds, besides the pain of the first operation, and what they suffer before, to prepare them for it, by being kept in darkness till they can find their meat, &c. and the misery that follows for a fortnight or more,

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are sometimes tortured a second time, because, perhaps, they have rubbed their eyes open again, or the cruelty was too favourably performed.

The distinguishing marks of the C O C K and H E N.

THE Cock of this kind may be easily distinguished from the Hen, at ten or twelve days old; the difference being very plain, if you view them together. The Cock-bird has a great deal more white in his wing than the Hen, particularly on his pinion; his breast is remarkably reder, and the feathers of the whole bird, of a higher and brighter colour than the Hen's. In an old bird, the head of the Cock is bluish; the back of a redish brown, with a mixture of ash-colour, or green; the breast of a fine red, and the belly white: The colours of the Hen are not so bright and lively, her rump is green, the back not so brown, and the belly inclines to a dirty kind of green; the breast is also of a duller colour, more upon the gray.

The time and manner of building their Nest.

They breed in April, and have young ones about the beginning of May. She builds near the top of a high hedge, or in the branches on the side of a tree: her nest is the prettiest of all small birds, excepting the Gold-Finch's, which excels it in beauty; the out-side is green-moss, small sticks, withered grass, horse and cow-hair, wool, feathers, &c. making an exceeding soft bed for her young, on which she lays four or five eggs of

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OF SINGING BIRDS. 89

a whitish colour, spotted with a few large redish brown spots, with a few small specks and streaks at the largest end, of the same colour.

Of the Young.

How to order and bring them up.

You may take them at ten days old, and feed them as you do the Gold-Finch or Linnet; they are hardy birds, that may be easily raised.

And when they are sick and out of order, apply the same things as you do to these birds.

These birds are taken in great plenty with clap-nets in June and July, especially the young flight, called Branchers; therefore, it is hardly worth the trouble of bringing them up from the nest; tho' some that are bred under the sweet-song Chaffinch, or any other fine song-bird, sometimes prove very good birds.

XVI. OF

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XVI. OF THE GREEN-FINCH, GREEN-LINNET, or GREEN-BIRD.

The Description and Character.

IT is a little larger than the Chaffinch, and is a good stout bird, of a strong hardy nature; Green-Finches are frequently kept in cages, but not much esteemed for their singing: they are more valued for their learning to ring the bells in cages contrived for that purpose; tho' some of them, if brought up from the nest, will learn to pipe and whistle the song of most other birds.

At the beginning of winter, and in hard weather, they gather in flocks, and are taken with clap-nets in great numbers.

The distinguishing marks of the C O C K and H E N.

HIS head and back are green, the edges of the feathers grayish, and the middle of the back hath something of a chesnut-colour intermixed; the fore-part of his head, neck, and breast, quite down to his belly and rump, are of a deep yellowish green; the lower part of the belly inclining to whitish, the borders of the outmost quill-feathers of the wings are of an elegant yellow, and the feathers along the ridge of the wing are also of a lovely yellow.

The colours of the Hen are not so bright and lively, and on the breast and back, hath oblong
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GREEN FINCH



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dusky spots; where the Cock is of a fine yellow, her colours are of a sordid green; the young Cock-birds, as soon as they are feathered, may be known from the Hens, by the same brightness in their colours.

The Time and Manner of building their Nest.

THEY build commonly in hedges, and make a large nest; the outside consists of hay, grass, stubble, &c. the middle of moss, the inside lined with feathers, wool, hair, &c. she lays five or six eggs, of a very faint green colour, sprinkled with small redish spots, especially at the blunt end.

Of the Young.

How to order and bring them up.

THEY have young ones about the middle of May, and may be taken at ten days old, and brought up with the same food and management as Linnets, or other birds of the Finch kind; they are not very tender, only keep them clean, and there is no fear but they will thrive.

If you regard the Cock's colours, he is as finely feathered as most birds; and in an aviary makes as pretty a show as the best, and sings a pretty ball amongst them.

He is seldom sick; but, when he is, give him what you give Linnets, Chaffinches, &c.

XVII. OF THE LINNET.

The Description and Character.

THIS bird is so universally well known, that a particular description is unnecessary. It is in length, from the point of the bill to the end of the tail, five inches and a half long, and usually weighs about ten drachms.

For the sweetness of its singing, the LINNET is so much esteemed, that, by many persons, it is thought to excell all small birds. It has certainly a curious fine note, little inferior to the best of birds, and may be taught likewise to pipe, whistle, or the song of any other fine bird; but as its own is so good, that trouble is unnecessary: the natural note of any fine song-bird is ever to be preferred; but where the bird has but an indifferent song of his own, then to learn him to pipe, whistle, &c. is very pleasant, and well worth the trouble. It is pretty apt in learning, if you bring it up from the nest, and will take the Wood-Lark's song to perfection, or that of the Canary-bird.

The Linnet, with the Bull-Finch, Nightingale, Black-Bird, &c. says ALONZO DE OVALLE, in his Account of Chili, form, some a bass, some a tenor, with all the other parts of harmony, beyond belief, under the shade of the trees in that kingdom in the summer-time.

• These sweet-song Linnets have been sold from one, to five guineas a-piece.

LINNET

Cock



Hen & Egg





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The distinguishing marks of the Cock and HEN.

THE Cock-bird of this kind may be known either old or young, by these two marks; first, the feathers on his back are much browner than those of the Hen: secondly, by the white of the wing; take your Linnet when the wing feathers are grown, and stretch out his wing, holding his body fast with the other hand; then observe the white upon the three or four longest feathers, if it appears clear, bright, and broad, and reaches up to the quills, it is a sure sign of a Cock-bird; for the white in the wing of the Hen, is much less, fainter and narrower.

The Time and Manner of building their Nest.

THEY build commonly in a thick bush, or hedge, and sometimes among furze-bushes, &c. making a small pretty nest, the outside of bents, dry'd weeds, and other stubble matter, and the bottom all matted together; the inside of fine soft wool, mixed with downy stuff, gathered from dried plants, with a few horse-hairs, made exceeding neat and warm, on which she lays four, and sometimes five eggs, with fine red specks, especially at the blunt end; and has young ones by the middle of April, or beginning of May.

Of

Of the Young.

How to order and bring them up.

SOME of these birds will have young ones three or four times a-year, especially, if they be taken from them before they fly out of their nests.

They may be taken at ten days old, or sooner; put them in a small basket prepared for that purpose; be sure to keep them warm, and feed them once in two hours, from six in the morning, till about six or seven at night: prepare rap-feed soaked in water ten or twelve hours, then pour off your water, and let it boil up in more clean water, scum and strain it; then bruise it very small, cleaning as many of the hulls from it as you can; then take a piece of the best white bread, first soak it in clean water, then boil it in a little milk, to a thick consistence; take one third rap-feed, and mix them together, till it become a soft paste or crowdy, making but little at a time, that they may have it fresh every day; because sour meat will throw the birds into a scouring, which often kills them: neither must their meat be too dry; for in such a case, it will make them vent burn, and that is as bad as if they had been scoured: when they begin to pick about their meat, and feed themselves, set scalded rap-feed in their cage, to wean them from the bread and milk as soon as possible; because sometimes feeding too long upon soft food, will make them rotten. It will be a month or six weeks before they will be able to crack their seeds, and live entirely upon hard meat.

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There are other sorts of food made use of in bringing up young Linnets, but this has been proved to answer as well as any.

When they are fully grown up, feed them with rap and Canary-seeds, three fourths rap, and one fourth Canary, it being the best food you can feed them with; you may give them a little hemp-seed at a time, but not too much, it being too fattening, and makes them dull and heavy; whereas a little now and then nourishes, and makes them chearful.

If you intend to learn them to whistle, let it be done when you feed them; for they will learn very much before they can crack hard seeds: or hang them under any bird you have a-mind they should learn his song; for these birds, when young, are exceeding apt for any song or tune; or they may be even taught to speak; for there is nothing so hard but labour and diligence will overcome.

Their Diseases and Cures.

THIS is a very healthful bird, and has been kept many years, without being subject to any malady; but sometimes he is troubled with melancholy, occasioned from a swelling at the end of his rump, from which, if ripe, you may with a needle let out the corruption, and anoint the part with the ointment of fresh butter and capon's grease, or take a bit of loaf-sugar moistened in your mouth, put it on the sore, and it will heal it: feed him for two or three days with the seeds and leaves of lettuce, beets, or the seeds of melon chop'd in pieces, which he will eat very greedily of; when you find him to mend,
take

take the melon seeds, &c. away, and give him his old diet again: you may put into his water a blade of saffron, and white sugar-candy, till you perceive the bird to be entirely recovered.

The disease this bird is most troubled with, is a scouring, occasioned by bad feeds, and many times for want of fresh water. There are three sorts of this distemper; the first very thin, and with a black substance in the middle, which is not very dangerous: the second is between a black and a white, but not so thin as the other, but very clammy and stinking; this is worse than the former. It is recovered by giving the bird some melon-feed shred, lettuce and beet-seeds bruised, and in his water put liquorish or saffron. The third and worst sort of scouring is the white clammy, which is dangerous and mortal, if not looked after in time: for this give him first flax-seeds, taking away all other feeds; then give him plantain-seeds, if green, otherwise they will do him no good: for want of plantain-seeds, give him some of the leaves shred small, or a little bruised hemp-feed, putting into his water as before, sugarcandy, liquorish, or a blade or two of saffron. You may give the bird, now and then a small quantity of seeded chick-weed, and a little chalk. You must be diligent at the first to observe him when he is sick; for this third and worst sort of scouring, if it be not taken at the first appearance, immediately causeth him to droop, and, in two or three days, his stomach will be quite gone, and then all medicines are useless.

They are likewise subject to surfeits, occasioned either by cold, or from eating too greedily upon greens; especially a rank sort of chick-weed, with broad leaves, and without seeds, which is hurtful both to old and young birds. This distemper

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temper may easily be perceived by seeing the bird pant, and heave his belly fast, and sit melancholy, with his feathers standing big, more puffed up than ordinary; he will now also split and cast his seed about the cage, not caring to eat at all: to discover it likewise, blow the feathers on his belly, and you will perceive it swelled, transparent, full of little red veins, all his little bowels sinking down to the extreme parts of his body, and, if far gone, black, which generally brings death. The cure of this disease, if taken in time, is to keep him warm, and give him oat-meal amongst his seeds, for three or four days, in order to cleanse him, and put liquorish in his water; but, if he is too loose, instead of oat-meal, give him maw-feed, and bruised hemp-feed, being more binding, and at the same time a little saffron in his water; then for his meat, give him beets, and lettuce to feed on, or some of the herb mercury, which is very good against this distemper for any sick bird: you may likewise give him melon-feed chopped small, and, at the bottom of the cage, lay some gravel with a little powder'd sugar, and a little ground oat-meal.

The last thing I shall take notice of is his moulting: careful nursing is the principal means of preserving birds under this malady, by keeping them from the cold or wind, which are very prejudicial to them at such a time; therefore be sure to keep him warm that he may not catch cold, which gives him a hoarseness. If the weather is very hot when the birds are in their moult, give them liquorish in their water, instead of saffron, and for their meat plantain and lettuce-feed; but none of that meat if it be cold weather: to cure his hoarseness, the best remedy is, to put some liquorish and a few annise-seeds in his water, and then to set him in a warm place.

ON THE

Death of a favourite LINNET.

A

P O E M.

SILENT and cold, beneath this mould,
 a lovely LINNET lies,
 And now no more, as heretofore,
 with neighbour DICKIE vies.
 His little throat with many a note,
 once charm'd the ravish'd ear,
 While wanton plays, and pretty ways,
 made every note more dear.
 His early song was loud and long,
 his ev'ning lays the same;
 Cheerful and gay he past the day,
 without reproach or blame.
 But what defence was innocence,
 or music's softest airs,
 Against a fate, that, soon or late,
 nor lord nor linnet spares?
 Vain man! be wise; before your eyes,
 keep still your latter end;
 The life of Lin was free from sin,
 Your's, pray in time amend.

XVIII.

XVIII. OF THE RED-POLE: Or,
Red-headed LINNET.

The Description and Character.

THIS Bird is about the size of the common Linnet: it is not a very fine bird for singing, but has a pretty chattering sort of song, tho' it cannot be called melodious; yet this bird is often kept in a cage, and by some people much valued for the sweetness of its singing, as well as for the beauty of its feathers, which is enough to recommend it.

The top of the head and breast of the Cock, is adorned with a remarkable shining red; the upper part of the body, like the common Linnet; the lower part of the belly inclining to a white; the prime feathers of the wings and tail, dusky; the tail about two inches long, and something forked; the outmost borders of the wing and tail-feathers around are white; the legs and feet are dusky; the claws black and long, for the bigness of the bird; but the legs very short.

In this kind, the Hen also hath a spot of red upon her head; but more faint than that of the Cock, and of a saffron colour.

They build much in the manner of the common Linnet; and feed upon Canary, hemp, and rap-
eed, as the Linnet, Gold-Finch, &c.

They are likewise taken with clap-nets, and lime-twigs, as they do Linnets, Gold-Finches, and other small birds.

XIX. Of

XIX. OF THE TWITE.

The Description and Character.

THIS bird is, in colour and make, something like the Linnet, but less: it is a bird vastly brisk and merry, that is always a singing; therefore they hang him among other birds, to provoke them to sing.

The Cock has a very short ash-coloured bill, the legs black, and has a curious red spot upon his rump, which the Hen hath not.

It is a bird not known to breed in this country: they visit some parts of England in the Winter, and go away again in the Spring; but what place they come from, or whither they go (as they say) to them is unknown: they are said to be very common in some parts of France, and are called there by a name, which with us signifies the Lesser Linnet; and they say their eggs are like the eggs of that bird, but less.

The bird-catchers take them as they do Linnets, &c. They feed upon Canary and rap-feed. It is a pretty familiar, gentle-natured bird, and by some reckoned well worth keeping.

XX. OF THE YELLOW-HAMMER.

The description and Character.

IT is equal to the Chaffinch in bigness. Both Cock and Hen are beautiful birds; and the Cock will sing very prettily when in the fields, but is not kept very commonly in a cage; yet he is no contemptible bird. Besides his song, his fine feathers are enough to recommend him: a lovely yellow adorns his head, throat, breast, and belly; his back and wings are pretty much like the Linnet's: the Hen is of a paler colour all over her body: and the parts that are of a fine yellow in the Cock, in the Hen are of a dirty green.

The Time and Manner of building their Nest.

THESE birds build upon the ground, at the foot or side of a bank, or at the side of a river, pond, or brook: they make a large flat ordinary nest; with moss, dry'd roots of grafs, weeds, &c. with horse-hair intermixed; more of the latter, than any other bird makes use of; she lays six or seven white eggs, veined and spotted with black.

Of the Young.

How to order and bring them up.

THEIR young ones are usually fit to take by the beginning of May; you may let them be ten or twelve days old before you take them: feed them with flesh meat, minced very fine, as you are directed to prepare it for other small birds; or you may bring them up as the Wood-lark or Linnet: they will eat likewise worms cut in small pieces, which food agrees very well with them.

This bird is so common every where, that any further particular notice of him is unnecessary; for the most part, they abide on the ground seeking their food, which is chiefly seeds, worms, and other insects.

W I N-

W I N T E R.

A

P O E M.

OUR ears the Lark, the Thrush, the Turtle blest,
And Philomela sweetest o'er the rest.

So in the shades, where, chear'd with summer-rays,
Melodious Linnets warbled sprightly lays:

Now when the Nightingale to rest removes,

The Thrush may chant to the forsaken groves;

But, charm'd to silence, listens while she sings,

And all the'aerial audience clap their wings.

Soon as the faded, falling leaves complain,

Of gloomy Winter's inauspicious reign;

No tuneful voice is heard of joy and love,

But mournful silence saddens all the grove;

All Nature mourns, the skies relent in show'rs,

Hush'd are the birds, and clos'd the drooping
flow'rs;

The flow'rs now droop, forsaken by the spring,

The birds, when left by Summer, cease to sing.

Behold the groves that shine with silver frost,

Their beauty wither'd, and their verdure lost;

No grateful dews descend from ev'ning skies,

Nor morning odours from the flow'rs arise;

No rich perfumes refresh the fruitful field,

Nor fragrant herbs their native incense yield:

No more the mounting Larks, while Daphne sings,

Shall, list'ning in mid-air, suspend their wings.

No more the Nightingales repeat their lays,

Or,

Or, hush'd with wonder, hearken from the sprays,
No more the streams their murmurs shall forbear,
A sweeter music than their own to hear.

Adieu, ye vales, ye mountains, streams, and groves,
Adieu, ye shepherds' rural lays and loves;
Adieu, ye flocks; farewell, ye Sylvan crew;
Music, farewell; and all the world, adieu.

DIRECTIONS, when and how Black-birds, Thrushes, Starlings, Wood-larks, Nightingales, Robins, Canary-birds, Finches, Linnets, &c. are to be taught with a Flagellet, or small organ.

THESE birds have great capacities for learning what they hear, especially, when they are taken young, and kept in a room where they cannot hear any thing; but what you intend to teach them, they will readily learn it, as airs, and tunes on the small flagellet, and on a small organ, that is made on purpose for teaching Canary-birds, &c. it is played upon by turning about a handle that it has; and, tho' one cannot play on any other musical instrument, yet he may teach his bird by this.

The TIME.

As to the time, when they are to be put in separate cages, in order to teach them; I think it may be about the time they leave off being fed by the hand, and begin to feed themselves, when they

they ought to be removed to separate rooms, out of the hearing of one another: and from that time, you are to play to them what you intend they shall learn, and always, as exactly as you can, the same way; for they will take it just as they hear it, both in the notes, and tune of the instrument; therefore your flagellet must be very small, the notes whereof are not too loud: there are some of them not above six inches long; for, if the tone of the instrument be too deep, their voices will not be able to come up to it.

The TUNES what.

As for the tunes, they must be taught only one fine short prelude, and a choice air; when they are taught more, they are apt to confound the one with the other, and being taught too much, they often learn nothing perfectly, their memory is so over-burdened that they know not what they sing.

When to PLAY.

You ought to give them a lesson early in the morning when you rise; another at noon, and another before they go to rest.

How OFTEN and in what MANNER.

THE tune ought to be repeated five or six times at every lesson; and those small airs must be play'd running, without repeating the first part of them twice; and the conclusion in the same manner, as is usually done in concerts, or other playing.

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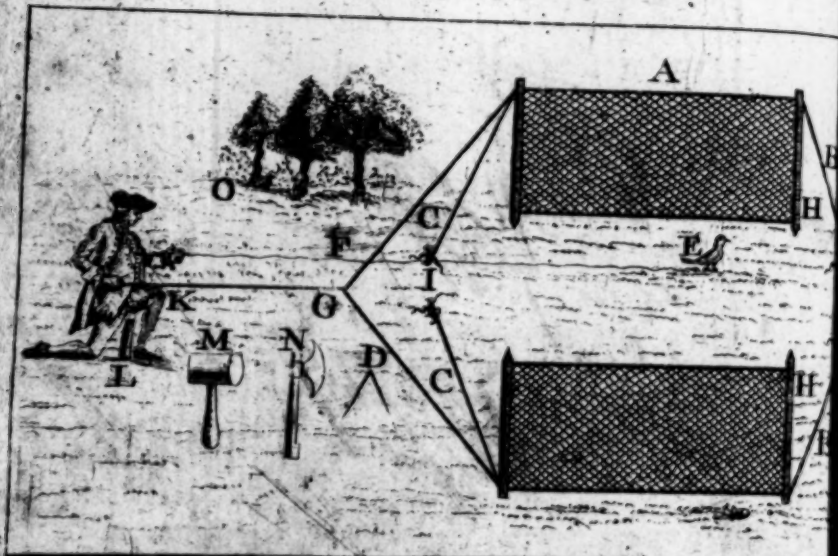
In what KEY.

A little prelude may be given him in *C-sol-faut* with a march, or any other tune, also in *C-sol-faut*, as well as the prelude.

One only at a time ought to be taught in the same room, especially after they begin to come into the tune, lest they confound one another: some darken their cages, while they are teaching them; but I think, as I observed before, that if you take them young from the nest, and feed them by the hand, and make them familiar with you, they will learn as well without it. I heard of a gentleman in Dublin, that taught the Canary-bird the tune Sally, with a prelude to it, by hanging him open in his shop, and playing to him: he learned the tune so perfectly, that no one that heard them both, and did not see them, could tell, whether it were he that played, or the bird that sung; the bird imitated him so exactly. You must not be discouraged, and give over playing to your birds, if they do not take the tune immediately; for, tho' they were brought up with their own sire, they would not have their song perfectly, till they came to a right age.

OF





EXPLANATION

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|--|---|
| A Shows the Bodies of the Main Net & how they ought to be laid | H The Stakes Which Stake down the four Nether points of y ^e And the two tail lines |
| B The tail or hinder lines Staked to the Ground | I The Stakes Which Stake down the fore lines |
| C The fore lines Staked to the Ground | K The Single line With the Wooden Button to pull the Net Over |
| D The knitting Needle | L The Stake that Stake down the Single line & Where the Main Net is |
| E The Birds Stake | M The Wooden Mallet |
| F The line which draws y ^e Birds Stake | N The Stake |
| G The drawing double lines of the Nets Which pulls them Over | O The Giges |

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OF THE DAY-NET.

The same being used for taking all manner of small birds, that play in the air, as Larks, Linnets, Finches, &c.

Happy if in a shade content,
You gilded chains despise,
Tread free the flow'ry meads, and breathe
The balm of vernal skies.

The Nature and Use of it.

THE time of year for using this net is, from August to November, when the young birds rove about in flights; and the best time, is very early in the morning: it is to be observed by the way, that the milder the air, and the brighter the sun is, the better will be your sport, and of longer continuance. The places where this net should be laid, ought to be plain champaign, either on short stubles, green-lays, or flat meadows, near corn-fields, and somewhat remote from towns and villages.

This net is composed of two, which must be exactly alike, and laid opposite, so even and close that when they are pulled over, the sides may be at least half a foot over the other.

The fashion of this net is described in the following figure, made of a fine pack-thread, with a small mesh, not exceeding half an inch square, and commonly three fathom long, and but one broad; it must be verged about with a small but strong cord; and the two ends extended upon two small poles, suitable to the breadth of the net, with

with four stakes, tail-strings, and drawing lines.

When you are come to the place where you intend to pitch your nets, be sure to have the wind either in front or behind them; if it be on either side, it hinders their playing smartly on the fowl. Open and lay them out at full length and breadth, staking down the lower sides all along upon the ground, so as only to move up and down. The upper sides must stand extended on the long cord, which must be staked down with strong stakes, very stiff on their lines at each end about five yards distant, in a direct even line with the lower verges of the net: Then fasten to the upper end of the foremost staves, your drawing-cord or hand-lines, which must be at least twenty-five yards long, to reach unto some natural or artificial shelter, by which means you may lye concealed from the fowl; there imitating, with a call in your mouth, several notes of birds, which you must learn by frequent practice, walking the fields for that purpose, observing the variety of several birds sounds; especially such as they call one another by.

Some have been so expert herein, that they could imitate the notes of twenty several sorts of birds at least; by which means they have caught ten to one, of another that was ignorant therein.

Having placed your gigs, then place your stales, which is a small stake of wood to prick down into the earth, having in it a mortice hole, in which a small slender piece of wood, about two foot long, is fastened so as it may move up and down at pleasure; fasten to this longer stick a small line, which running through a hole in the aforesaid stick, and so coming up to the place where you are to sit, you may, by drawing the line up

and

and down, raise the longer stick from the ground, as you see occasion.

Then fasten a live Green-Bird, Gold-Finch, or any other such like bird, to this longer stick, which by making it to stir up and down by your pulling the line, will entice the birds to come to your net. Or, if you are not provided with decoy-birds, trained for that purpose, take them along with you in small cages that are light and portable: both this and the other stale, are to be placed between the two nets, about two or three feet distance from each other, so that, in the falling of the nets, the cords may not touch or annoy them.

Having placed your nets and stales in this manner; go to the further end of your long drawing-lines, and, having placed yourself, lay the main drawing-line a-cross your thigh, and with your left-hand pull the stale-line to shew the birds; and when you perceive them to play about your nets and stales, then pull the net over with both hands, with a quick, but not too hasty motion; otherwise your sport will be spoiled.

You must always remember to lay behind you, where you sit, all the spare instruments and implements to be used; as the stakes, poles, lines, pack-thread, knitting-pin, and needle; your mallet to knock in the stakes upon occasion: And lastly, Take care never to let yourself run out of live-birds, for stales, as also, feed and water placed beside them; for you must not be unprovided with these, upon any account.

Having thus treated of the day-net, and the manner of using it, as it is commonly practised by all bird-catchers, correspondent to the above description, I have, for the satisfaction of the curious, given an exact delineation of it in the

opposite plate, with references to the particular parts.

Happy the man who studying Nature's laws,
Thro' known effects, can trace the secret cause.
His mind possessing in a quiet state,
Fearless of fortune, and resign'd to fate.
Happy next him, who to the shades retires,
But doubly happy, if the muse inspires;
Blest, whom the sweets of home-felt quiet please,
But far more blest, who study joins with ease,
Happy the man, who strings his tuneful lyre,
Where woods, and brooks, and breathing fields
inspire;
Thrice happy you, and worthy best to dwell,
Amidst the rural joys you sing so well.

DIRECTIONS

For making BIRD-LIME; and how
to use it, for taking Water-fowl,
and all manner of small birds.

BIRD-LIME is a viscid substance, prepared
various ways, and from various materials,
for the catching of birds, mice, and other ver-
mine.

The Bird-lime, ordinarily used, is made from
holly-bark boiled ten or twelve hours: the green
coat being separated from the other, it is cover-
ed up a fortnight in a moist place; then let it be
pounded into a tough paste, that no fibres of the
wood be left, and wash it in a running stream, till
no motes appear; then put to a fervent four or
five days, and, having skimmed it as often as an-
ny thing should arise, lay it up for use.

A TRUE

A TRUE and exact way to make your best WATER-BIRD-LIME, to take Snipes, Fieldfares, &c. or any other birds that delight in the water.

TAKE a pound of the strongest bird-lime you can get, and after it is well washed in clear spring-water, till you find it very pliable, and the hardness quite extinguished, then beat out the water, till you cannot perceive a drop to appear; then let it be well dried, and having so done, put it into an earthen pot, or a sauce-pan that is well tinned, and add thereto as much of the best capon's grease, or any other without salt, as will make it run: then add two spoonfuls of strong vinegar, one spoonful of the best sallad oil, and a small quantity of Venice turpentine; boil them all gently together upon a soft fire, stirring it continually, then take it from the fire, and let it cool; and when at any time you have occasion to use it, anoint your twigs, straws, or any other small things, and no water will take away the strength.

How to take SNIPES with Water-bird-Lime.

WITH this bird-lime so ordered, take two or three hundred bird-twigs, lime them very well then finding out their haunts, which you will perceive by their dung, and in very hard weather where the water lies open, they will lye very thick, and observing the place where they most

feed, set your limed twigs at a yard distance, and place them so as to stand sloping some one way, and some another; then retire two or three hundred paces from the place, and you will find there shall not one snipe in ten miss your twigs, by reason they spread their wings, and fetch a round close to the ground before they light: When you see any taken, stir not at first, for they will feed with the twigs under their wings; and, as others come over the place, will be a decoy to entice them; but when you see the coasts clear, and but few that are not fast, then take up your birds, and leave one or two fastened to decoy the others flying over that way to the same place: if there be any other open places near-by, put them off from those haunts; for they can feed in no hard place, by reason of their bills: in a snow, you will have them extraordinary thick in such places.

How to take FIELDFARES.

WHEN they rove in flights, which is about Michaelmas, take your gun and shoot one or two of them; then, having prepared about two or three hundred or more limed twigs, take a great birchen bough, and cut off all the small twigs; then make little holes and clefts in all places about the bough, and there place in your limed twigs; then set your Fieldfares upon the top of the bough, in such order that they may seem to sit alive. Let this bough of limed twigs be set near where they come in a morning to feed, (for they keep a constant place till their food is gone) so that others flying but near, will quickly espy the top birds, and fall in whole flocks to them:
by

OF SINGING BIRDS. 113

by this great numbers have been taken at one fall.

Another method how to take all manner of small Birds that are at large, with Bird-lime.

IN cold weather, that is, in frost and snow, all sorts of small birds gather together in flocks, as Larks, Chaffinches, Gold-finches, Linnets, Yellow-hammers, &c. All these, except the Lark, perch on trees and bushes, as well as feed on the ground.

If they resort about your house, or adjacent fields, then use bird-lime that is well prepared, and not too old, which order after the following manner :

Put the bird-lime into an earthen dish or saucepan, adding to it fresh lard or capon's grease, putting an ounce of either to a quarter of pound of bird-lime ; then setting it over the fire, melt it gently together : but you must take care not to let it boil, which would take away the strength of the lime and spoil it.

It being thus prepared, and you being furnished with a quantity of wheat-ears or small twigs, cut your straws about a foot long, besides the ears ; then from the bottom of the ears, to the middle of the straws, lime it about six or seven inches : let your lime be very warm, that it may run the thinner upon the straw ; and therefore be the less discernible, and liable to be suspected by the birds.

Then go into the field, carrying with you a bag of chaff and thresh'd ears, which scatter together for the compass of fifteen or twenty yards

breadth; (it is best in snow) then stick up the limed straws or twigs with the ears leaning, or at the ends touching the ground; then retire from the place, and traverse the grounds all round about, and by that means the birds, being disturbed in their other haunts, will fly to the place where the chaff, &c. has been scattered, and begin a-picking at the ears of corn, and finding that they stick upon them, they will straight-way mount up from the ground, and in their flight, the limed straws lying under their wings will cause them to fall, and, not being able to disengage themselves, may be taken up by the hand with ease.

If the birds that fall where your limed straws are be Larks, do not go near them till they rise of themselves; by this method some dozens have been caught at a flight.

Having performed this in the morning, take away all the limed ears, that so the birds may feed boldly, and not be disturbed or frightened against next morning, and, in the afternoon, bait the same place with fresh chaff and ears of corn, and let them rest till the morning after; then having stuck up fresh limed wheat-ears, repeat your morning birding-recreation.

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P. 113

VIRGINIA NIGHTINGALE



SWALLOW



A P P E N D I X

O F T H E

VIRGINIA-NIGHTINGALE.

C A L L E D T H E

RED-BIRD, or RED-GROSBEAK.

THE VIRGINIA NIGHTINGALE in bigness nearly resembles the Song-Thrush; the bill is of a paleish red or dusky colour, encompassed with a border of black feathers extended below the chin; the head pretty large, upon which there grows a large pyramidical tuft, or trowning crest, of a bright scarlet, with which colour the neck, breast and belly are adorned; the back, and tips or points of the wings and tail are more faint, and rather of a pale brownish colour.

This bird has many strange gesticulations when it views its image in a glass, by raising and lowering its crest, shaking its wings, and setting up its tail after the manner of the Peacock, making a hissing noise and striking at the glass with its bill.

There is a surprising strength in the bill of this little creature, as is seen from its cracking the stones

stones of fruit with the utmost ease and expedition, such as almond, olives, &c. the kernels of which they are very fond of.

These birds are found chiefly in Virginia, New-England, and several parts of North-America, from whence they are frequently brought over into England, and very highly valued for their singing, as well as for the elegance of their colours, which makes them sometimes sell at a great price.

They sing very agreeably, and some of their notes are much like those of the Nightingale, from whence it is supposed to derive the name of the Virginia-Nightingale.

The Hen, as in all other birds, is not so beautiful in her colours as the Cock, being more brown, with only a tincture of red; yet, when in cages, she sings along with the Cock, and is brought over with him.

They catch them in the same manner as we do all our other small birds, by removing the snow, and baiting the places where they frequent, with such food as they usually feed upon.

The breeding of them has been attempted, but never could as yet be brought to any perfection.

They feed upon hemp and Canary-seeds, and will eat also the Wood-Lark's and Nightingale's food.

When they are sick, a spider or meal-worm will relieve them.

Or

Common HOUSE-SWALLOW.

IT is about seven inches long from the point of the bill to the end of the tail, and from the point of each wing, when extended, about twelve; generally weighing about fourteen or fifteen drams: The bill is but short, and is a little flat and depressed, of a black colour, sharp pointed, but broad at the base. The mouth is very wide, the roof of which and the tongue are yellow: the eyes are large and of a hazel colour.

The head, neck, and upper parts of the body, are of a fine shining dark purpleish blue, with an orange colour'd spot above the bill, and another of the same colour underneath; the breast and belly are of a dusky white, with a shade, or dash of red. The quill-feathers are black, but the coverts are of the same colour with the head and back. The tail is forked and pretty long, and made up of twelve feathers, the outmost of which are near an inch longer than the rest, and end in sharp points; the rest shortening by degrees, and are all black except the two middlemost, with a white spot upon each; which spots make a beautiful line that crosses the tail, upon all but the two middle feathers. The legs and feet are black; the former very short.

They feed upon beetles, flies, gnats, and other small insects; many of which they catch in their flights thro' the air, and over ponds of water. They build in chimneys, and under the eaves, and copings of houses.

They are well known to be birds of passage, that come here in the Spring, and leave us about the latter end of September. We have various, and very different accounts from many learned
and

and ingenious men, with relation to the places to which they go; it seems most rational, and is, I think, most probable, that they pass into some hot countries, such as Egypt, Ethiopia, &c.

Certain it is, that the Swallows neither come hither merely for warm weather, nor retire merely from cold: they, like the shoals of fish in the sea, pursue their prey; They are a voracious creature, and feed flying; for their food is the insects, of which, in our summer evenings, in damp and moist places, the air is full. They come hither in the summer, because our air is fuller of fogs and damps than in other countries, and, for that reason, breeds greater quantities of insects. If the air be hot and dry, the gnats die of themselves, and even the Swallows will be found famish'd for want, and fall down dead out of the air, their food being taken from them: in like manner, when cold weather comes in, the insects all die, and then of necessity the Swallows quit us, and follow their food wherever they go: this they do in the manner I have mentioned above; for sometimes they are seen to go off in vast flights, like a cloud; and sometimes again, when the wind grows fair, they go away, a few and a few, as they come, not staying at all upon the coast.

Some general Observations on the foregoing TREATISE.

OF all the various species of singing birds commonly bred in Britain, none seem so hardy or so well adapted to the climate, as those that are the genuine and native produce of the country. Many very fine foreign birds when imported here, or when hatched from a brood originally imported, often degenerate and lose their spirits,

rits, and seldom arrive at that perfection of singing with which their native air inspires them. The Nightingale and Wood-Lark, two of the most melodious of the musical tribe, rarely, if ever, thrive in this country. It is true they are naturally delicate and tender, and extremely subject to colds, and cramps, and these, the small exercise they have in a cage contributes not a little to foster; besides our ignorance of those natural medicines which they pick up in the fields or woods, often prevents our capacity of curing them: but it is not to be doubted, that a change of air has the same effect on these as on other animals; more especially, as their habit of body is so very nice, that they are not able to bear the least neglect of management. For this reason, the Sky-Lark, the Linnet and Gold-Finch, as being natives, and hardy birds, seem the fittest for our training and amusement. All of them are extremely entertaining and surprizingly agreeable in their different ways; the Sky-Lark, for a vast compass of natural notes; the Linnet for his docility in imitating regular music, and the Gold-Finch, besides his agreeable note, for his faculty of learning to draw water, and such other conceits. These may almost always be bred with success, and continue to divert us for many years.

Of all foreigners, the Canary-bird bids the fairest for recompensing our care and pains. It is naturally a healthy bird, and if under proper management, may be preserved a long time. The custom some have of coupling them with Gold-Finches, contributes to the hardness of the offspring, tho' they degenerate both in colour and song. As they are almost the only birds which we take the trouble to hatch and bring from the egg, the satisfaction we have in supplying them with necessaries, both for food and building, in
ob.

observing their little courtships when pairing, their dexterity in rearing their nests, the readiness of the male to take his turn in all the duties of building hatching and feeding, together with the continual melody where with they charm us, affords a pleasure as serene and exquisite as any we can feel beside, and fills our minds with gratitude and love to that Supreme Being, who has formed such a variety of beautiful, harmonious creatures, for our admiration and amusement. Of the larger kind of birds, which we often train up for our diversion, such as the Black-Bird, the Starling and Song-Thrush, none of them seem so agreeable companions as the above; tho' all of them are fine singers: the two former cost us much pains in teaching, as their natural notes are somewhat wild and unharmonious; and the latter, tho' remarkable for his vast variety of music, is so loud and clamorous in his song, as almost to deafen the ears of the hearer, and therefore the woods seem a fitter habitation for him than the cage. Some of the other small birds are endowed with very fine natural notes, but have neither that variety of harmony, nor that facility of being taught, as these above-mentioned have; besides that many of them are sullen, and extremely stubborn in their manner: I would therefore advise such of my countrymen as are lovers of birds, chiefly to cultivate and train up the most melodious of the species, and such as are natives of the climate, *viz.* the Sky-Lark, the Linnet and Gold-Finch; and if they can afford the time and attention requisite, they may hatch Canaries, and raise an aviary in their houses; which, by an almost uninterrupted concert of natural music, will sufficiently compensate their cost and trouble.

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